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# The STRANGE ADVENTURES of PRINCE CHARMING







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PRINCESS YOLANDE, PRINCE CHARMING, KING HULLABALLOO, AND RIGOLO



THE  
STRANGE ADVENTURES  
of PRINCE CHARMING

*A STORY FOR THE YOUNG & OLD*  
by MILTON GOLDSMITH



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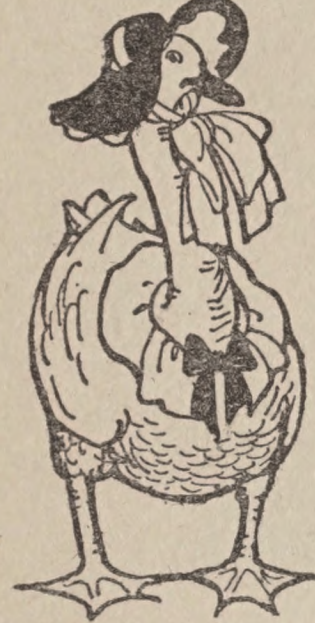




The PRINCE STARTS  
his ADVENTURES. ❀ ❀ ❀



## CHAPTER I.



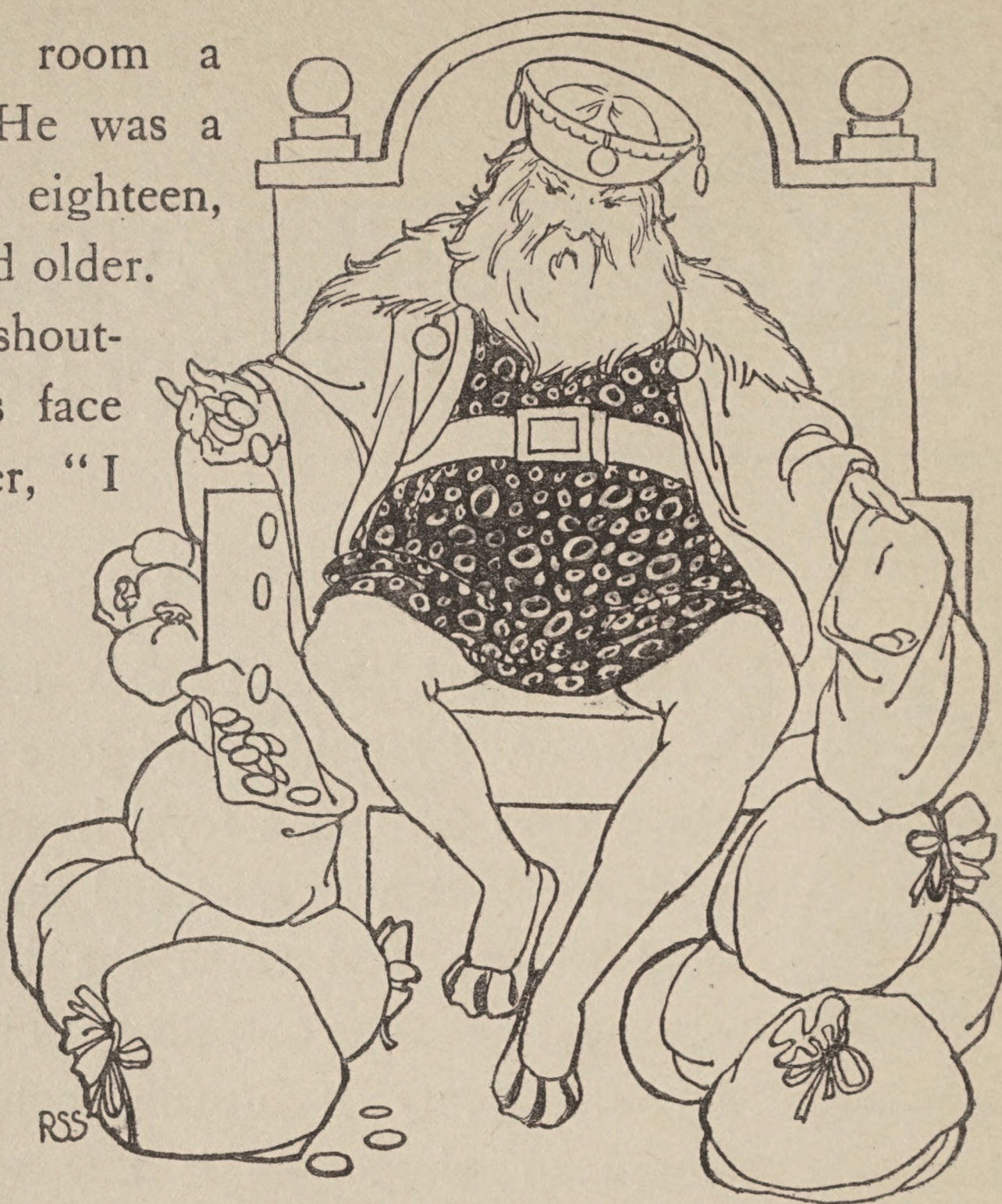
**K**ING HULLABALLOO was in a very bad humor. Everything had gone wrong, as it sometimes does even in a royal household. To begin with, the milk was sour, and the eggs tasted after cold storage, and when the black-bird pie was opened, there were only nineteen birds instead of the four-and-twenty it usually contained, and they absolutely refused to sing. Is it any wonder the King felt cross? To make matters still worse, the head chauffeur had just brought word that Prince Charming, the heir to the throne, had been thrown in the air by an explosion of the royal automobile, and that in trying to break a record, he had broken the machine.

“Send the Prince to me at once” shouted the King in such an angry voice that the queen fainted and all the courtiers trembled like aspen leaves for fear. Any one that has seen an aspen leaf tremble, will realize their great terror. Prince Charming came



into the throne room a moment later. He was a handsome lad of eighteen, although he looked older.

"Young man," shouted the King, his face purple with anger, "I hear you have got into trouble again. It is time you did something useful. At your age, I had killed three dragons, captured seven giants, and rescued your mother from an enchanted castle.



THE KING COUNTING HIS MONEY

You have done nothing but kept the Court in hot water."

"But father," stammered the Prince.

"But me no buts," growled the King. "To-morrow you set out on your travels. Don't dare to come back until you have rescued a Princess or done something equally sensible. Be worthy to bear the great historical name of Hullabaloo." After more harsh remarks which set every one trembling again, the King went into the parlor to count his money, (which he did regularly



every day), while the Queen, very sad indeed, went into the kitchen and ate her usual allowance of bread and honey.

In his heart Prince Charming was glad to allowed to go on a voyage of adventure. His first step was to become a Knight. Since the days of King Arthur and his Round Table, all brave deeds have been done by Knights. Now the quickest way to become a Knight, as every one knows, is to take a course of instruction in some good correspondence college. Charming telephoned at once to the F. C. S., (which means Fairyland Correspondence School) for a complete course of lessons. It came next morning by express,—a big heap of books, a blackboard, and a phonograph. It was most interesting, and, oh, so easy!

The first lesson taught him how to become a Knight of Labor, the second made him a Knight of Rest, and so on by easy stages until he became a 33d degree Knight Errant with the title of "Sir" before his name. The other books contained the histories of Jack the Giant Killer, Jack and the Beanstalk, The Arabian Nights, When Knighthood was in Flower, Don Quixote, and other true stories which told him exactly how to kill a dragon, capture a giant, make a Genie look like thirty cents, and rescue a beauteous maiden from some hideous monster, to be found only in books of Unnatural History.

At the end of the week Charming graduated at the head of his class, a full-fledged knight, last night, to-morrow night, and every other night. He received a beautiful diploma with "F. C. S."



printed on in gold and tied with a blue ribbon. They also gave him a guide book and road map which showed all the places where there were enchanted castles and captive princesses, and where a good correspondence-school Knight would be apt to find a thrilling but not too dangerous job. Charming next went to the Fairy Department Store on Presto Change Street, and bought all he needed for his trip,—an invisible cap, a magic sword, and a pair of seven-league boots that would carry him twenty-one miles at every step. He also got a license tag, as the speed laws were severe in foreign lands.

Next morning he bade his father and mother a touching farewell. The King was about to give him some pocket money, but as his Majesty was of a very economic turn of mind, he concluded to give him some good advice instead, which, I am sorry to say,



CHARMING RECEIVES HIS DIPLOMA



the Prince forgot before he had gone a single league. His mother gave him a loving kiss, a ham sandwich to eat on the way in case he got hungry where there were no hotels, and a four-leaf-clover,



A TOUCHING FAREWELL

made of gold, which had been given him by his Fairy Godmother for good luck on the day of his christening. The band in the palace played "Good by, my lover, good bye," the flags were all waving and the people cheering, when the Prince set out on his travels. The people seemed glad he was going; some even accompanied him as far as the suburbs, fearing he might have



some regrets and come back. This shows how popular he was. Once in the open country he turned on the speed lever and was off in earnest. Gee whiz, how those boots flew over the ground! In just half an hour he had covered 2700 leagues. "This is better than automobiling," said the Prince as the hills and forests fairly flew by. "I wonder where I am now." He knew by the color of the scenery that he had left his father's country, and as he had gone east, he must be in the land of Nod, where Old King Meriwinkle ruled.







## CHAPTER II.

**P**RESENTLY he came to a mountain that blocked his path, and there seemed no way of getting over. His boots were not geared for climbing hills. But that didn't worry Charming. He knew that it was one of the rules of Fairyland to put all sorts of obstacles in the path of a hero, just to make him invent a way to overcome them. At the foot of the mountain sat an old woman whose face was as wrinkled as the rocks that hung above her. All those wrinkles had no doubt been dimples when she was young, but the finger of Time had stretched them out till her face looked like a fisherman's net. Her raven locks were hanging down her back like those in the advertisement of some hair tonic, and she was crying bitterly.

At first Charming thought she was a witch, and he preferred not to have anything to do with witches, but as she had no broom he made up his mind that she might be a fairy in disguise, so he said with his politest bow, "Why this grief, my dear lady?"



"Alas," sobbed the old woman, (who really was a good fairy, and sat there every day to see who was worthy of her help), "I lost my only hairpin on the other side of this mountain and can't put up my hair without it."

"I'm sorry," replied the Prince, "but I have no hairpin about me. Won't a toothpick or a corkscrew do instead?"

"Oh, no," sobbed the old woman as though her heart would break; "If only some one would carry me over and help me find it."

"Why of course," said Charming, who knew from the tales he had read that this was only a plan to try his courage and patience. "Jump right on my back."

The old woman did so with a single spring, showing great agility for a person with so many wrinkles. Strange to say she wasn't at all heavy, and actually made the prince feel lighter too. She directed him to a cleft in the rocks, through which they passed, and in about two and a half minutes they were on the other side of the mountain. The Prince set her down carefully and helped her look for her hairpin, which he soon found under a weeping willow tree, where it had sprouted and was growing quite a crop of false curls.

"Thank you, my dear," said the old woman. "As a reward for your kindness, let me tell you that in yonder castle there languisheth Fatinella, a princess who wants to get rescued. According to the will of her crazy grandfather, she may only be saved by and married to a Prince who can



solve a riddle. So far no one has been able to guess it. The answer is 'Bean-Soup.' Everybody guesses 'Pea-Soup,' which is similar and yet so very different. Now go, my dear, and may you be the lucky one."

He thanked her and she kissed him on the brow. He hurried to the castle repeating to himself "Bean Soup, Bean Soup," so that he wouldn't forget it. Once by mistake he said "Pea Soup" but he corrected himself at once.

It took about an hour to reach the castle, which was a great mass of concrete, made to imitate gray stone, with big towers. Near the gate was a painted sign which read as follows:

#### RULES FOR THE RESCUE OF THE PRINCESS.

1. Only sons of real kings and possessing fairy godmothers can compete.
2. Every competitor must have a certificate of vaccination.
3. Register your name and address with the head porter at the door.
4. Knights without baggage must pay in advance for their lodging.
5. The management will not be responsible for armor or helmets unless checked in the coat room.
6. The daily riddle will be given out at 3 P. M. sharp.
7. Only three guesses will be allowed.
8. Any knight failing to guess the riddle will be confined to the lowest dungeon for life, if he should live so long.



9. In the event of any knight guessing the riddle, he shall marry the princess at once for better or worse, with the probability in favor of the latter.

By order of his Majesty,

MERIWINKLE

Surely such rules would have frightened off all but the most courageous. Charming feared nothing, however, for he knew from the old hairpin-woman just what to do and say. At the door was a large automobile horn, from which he pressed a few honks, and presently the head porter appeared, looking very important in his powdered wig and purple uniform.

"Is the Princess Fatinella in?" asked the Prince.

"She is," answered the head porter, "and will continue in until some brave prince gets her out."

"I am the man," answered Charming proudly. "Take her my card, also my vaccination certificate and my F. C. S. Diploma. Tell her, too, that I have had the measles and whooping-cough, have had my adenoids removed, and have been operated on for appendicitis, so that I am ready to brave the worst for her sweet sake."

The head porter gazed on this intrepid youth in wonder and admiration. He was certainly the most up-to-date young Prince that had ever presented himself.

"Go to her," he said with tears in his eyes; "she is in Cell No. 23, corridor 13, right to the left. You can't enter the cell but you may speak to her through the grating."



With eager feet Charming sped to the cell and feasted his eyes on Fatinella. Ah, me! but she was sweet,—so sweet that her cell was like that of the honeycomb. She had an oval face crowned with a wealth of golden hair, her deep blue eyes flashed fire, she had a rosy mouth, and thirty-two perfectly lovely pearly teeth all her own. Her smile was the most delightful Charming had ever beheld, and as he gazed on her he felt that she must be his and he hers and they theirs. It seemed like a sin to win so lovely a princess



CHARMING INTERVIEWS FATINELLA

through such a simple riddle, whose answer was "Bean Soup."

Fatinella seemed to like Charming too, and when she heard that he had come to rescue her, she wept a tear or two, and hoped he wouldn't be imprisoned for her sake. He smiled a hopeful smile and replied that there was no danger of that, as he was going to solve the riddle first



guess. Then she put her hand between the bars and he kissed it and said he trusted it would be his to keep forever.

At three o'clock to the minute the whole royal Court assembled in the back parlor to watch the tournament. King Meriwinkle, a jolly, fat, good-natured monarch with a red beard and merry eyes and a mole on his nose, swung his sceptre three times around his head, hit it a whack on the mahogany table, and bade Charming welcome. As a rule there were several knights waiting for the riddle, but the supply had given out of late, and Charming was the only

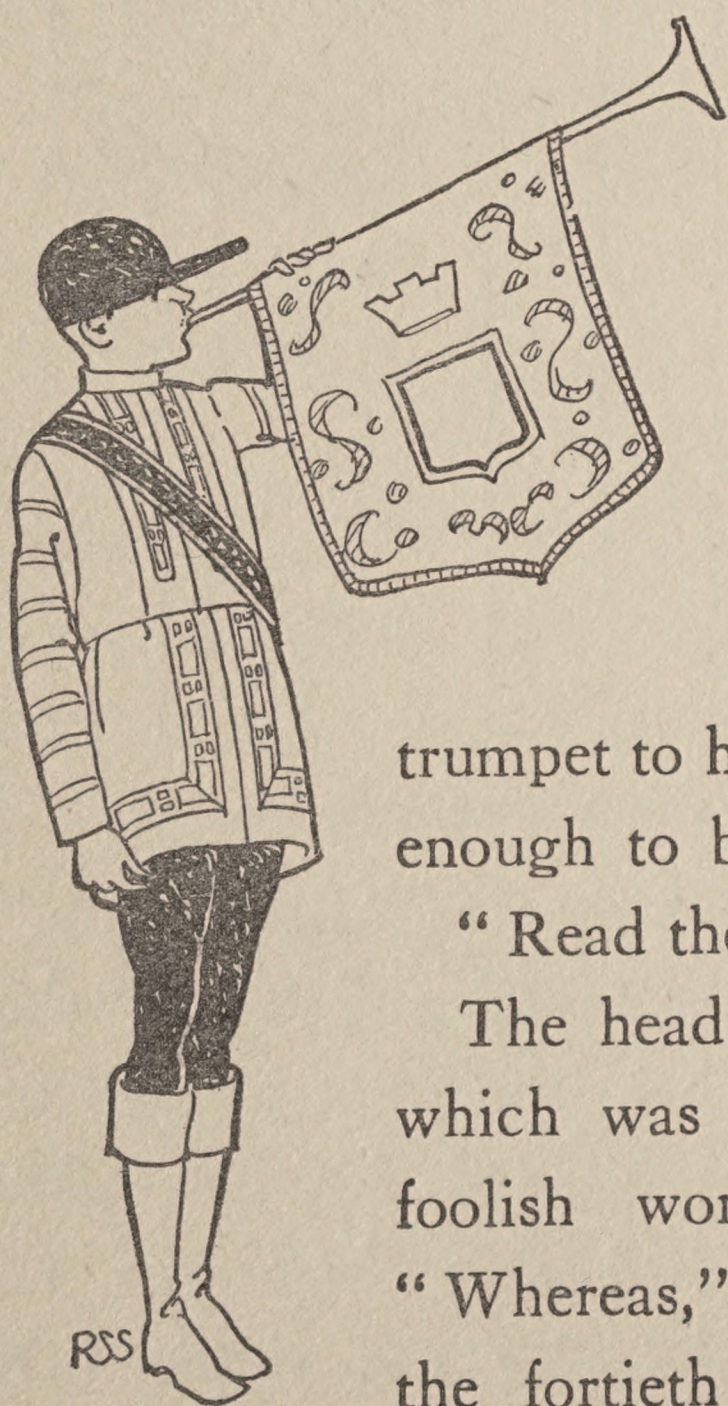
applicant. To tell the truth, he felt rather nervous, for everybody was looking at him suspiciously, as though he were doing something very naughty.

"Blow the trumpet!" exclaimed the King.

The chief trumpeter put the trumpet to his lips and blew "Tara—Tara!" loud enough to be heard in the next Kingdom.

"Read the proclamation!" shouted the King.

The head muckamuck got up and read a paper which was so long and dull and had so many foolish words in it, such as "To wit" and "Whereas," that Charming stopped listening after the fortieth paragraph.





"Announce the riddle!" yelled the King.

The Chief Riddle Editor, who got his training through writing puzzles for the magazines, arose and read as follows:

"What does a foolish donkey do  
When it can't reach the hay?  
Again, what does the stupid boy,  
When he can't have his way?  
Also the Prince who cannot solve  
The riddle we give to-day?"

"Bean Soup!" exclaimed Charming. "That's easy."

"Not so, replied the merry monarch. "That was the answer to yesterday's riddle. Two more guesses."

Charming looked about him in surprise. Had the Fairy deceived him? Was she a wicked witch after all? "Pea Soup," he cried, his head in a whirl.

"Wrong again," laughed the King with a merry roar. The jailor jangled the keys and made ready to lock up Charming for the rest of his natural life. Charming thought for a while, his brain swimming. He hadn't listened to the riddle, so sure had he been of the answer. At last he said in desperation.

"Give it up."

A great shout rent the silence. "Hurrah!" Even the King threw his crown up into the air, and broke his sceptre on the mahogany table, and shouted for joy. Charming had guessed correctly. The answer was "Give it up."

Everybody kissed Charming and wished him joy. The





THE PRINCESS FELL AROUND HIS NECK

Princess Fatinella was released from her cell, and fell around her rescuer's neck shedding real tears of happiness. She had been locked up for just eighteen weary years, and was glad to mix in society again.

"Take her, she is yours," cried the King. Then he added in a whisper. "I'm glad to get rid of her. She was a big expense to me and these little tournaments in her honor were getting to be somewhat of a bore."

He rapped with what remained of the sceptre, and ordered dinner, and the

whole court sat down and ate a dozen indigestible courses, and drank champagne until it gave them real pain. Charming toasted the Princess, and all went merry as a marriage bell, which was the merriest thing the poet Byron could think of.

Then the Princess went to her room to get ready for the wedding, while the King telephoned for a taxicab to call and get the happy couple to the station in time for the 5.27 train.



An hour later Charming was still waiting for his Princess.

"Does it always take her so long to dress?" he asked.

"Oh yes," replied the merry monarch. "If a woman could change her clothes as quickly as she does her mind, this would be a delightful world."

He rang the electric button and the maid of honor appeared.

"Tell the Princess," said the King, "to hurry. Prince Charming is getting impatient."

"The Princess has been gone for over half an hour," said the maid of honor in a tone of real surprise.

"Gone?"

"Yes. In the taxicab. Was not the Prince with her?"

"No, he has been waiting here. What can it mean?"

A hurried search was made through the castle and it was discovered at last, by a note which the Princess Fatinella had left on her dressing table, that she had run away with the Chief Riddle Editor, for whom she had always had a puzzling fondness.

"Well, my boy, I congratulate you!" said the King. "It was a lucky escape for you!" and falling upon the Prince's bosom he shed tears of joy and grief,—about half and half. So poor Charming had to begin all over again.





### CHAPTER III.

PRINCE CHARMING, in order to make up for the time he had lost, geared up his seven league boots, turned the lever on full, and strode away. The country seemed like a streak so fast did he go, and he began to enjoy his trip very much indeed. All at once he heard a shrill whistle and a voice called stop.

"I wonder if that means me," thought the Prince. He shut off the power from his boots, put on the brakes, and instantly stood stock still. Before him stood the funniest looking fellow he had ever seen. He had a face like a baboon, a beard like a billy goat, and a fur coat like polar bear. The Prince knew at once it was an "Ictopu," not that he had ever seen one, for all the Ictopus in his country were dead, but he had once seen a picture of one on a post-card advertising the "Ictopu Brand" of Baking Powder or something like that. The creature had on a policeman's cap and star, and so the Prince knew he had to be polite.

"Did you call?" he asked.



"Oi did thot," replied the Ictopu with a familiar brogue. "I'm the captain av the perlice foorce, an I arrist yez fer scorchin."

"Why," said the poor prince, "my boots are only geared to seven leagues."

"Thot's too fast," said the Ictopu. "Six leagues is the limit without a special permit from the perlice department. Come along with me."

Without allowing Charming to say a word in self defense he seized him by the arm and dragged him before Ogre Bugug, who made his home at the Police Station.

"Oh, what shall I do?" thought the Prince in despair. "There is nothing like this in the old Fairy tales."

After a long walk they reached the station house, where they found the magistrate giving a deaf man a hearing. Ogre Bugug was a disagreeable old fellow with a green face and neglected teeth. He had never been to a dentist in his life, which was certainly careless. He had once been a wild ogre and lived in an enchanted castle, but had been caught by Jack the Giant-Killer, and while not entirely subdued, he was tame enough to be a magistrate.

"What has the prisoner done?" shouted Bugug when he saw the Prince.

"Speeding, your Honor," replied the Ictopu. "He was going seven leagues a second, and never a horn to warn pedestrians."



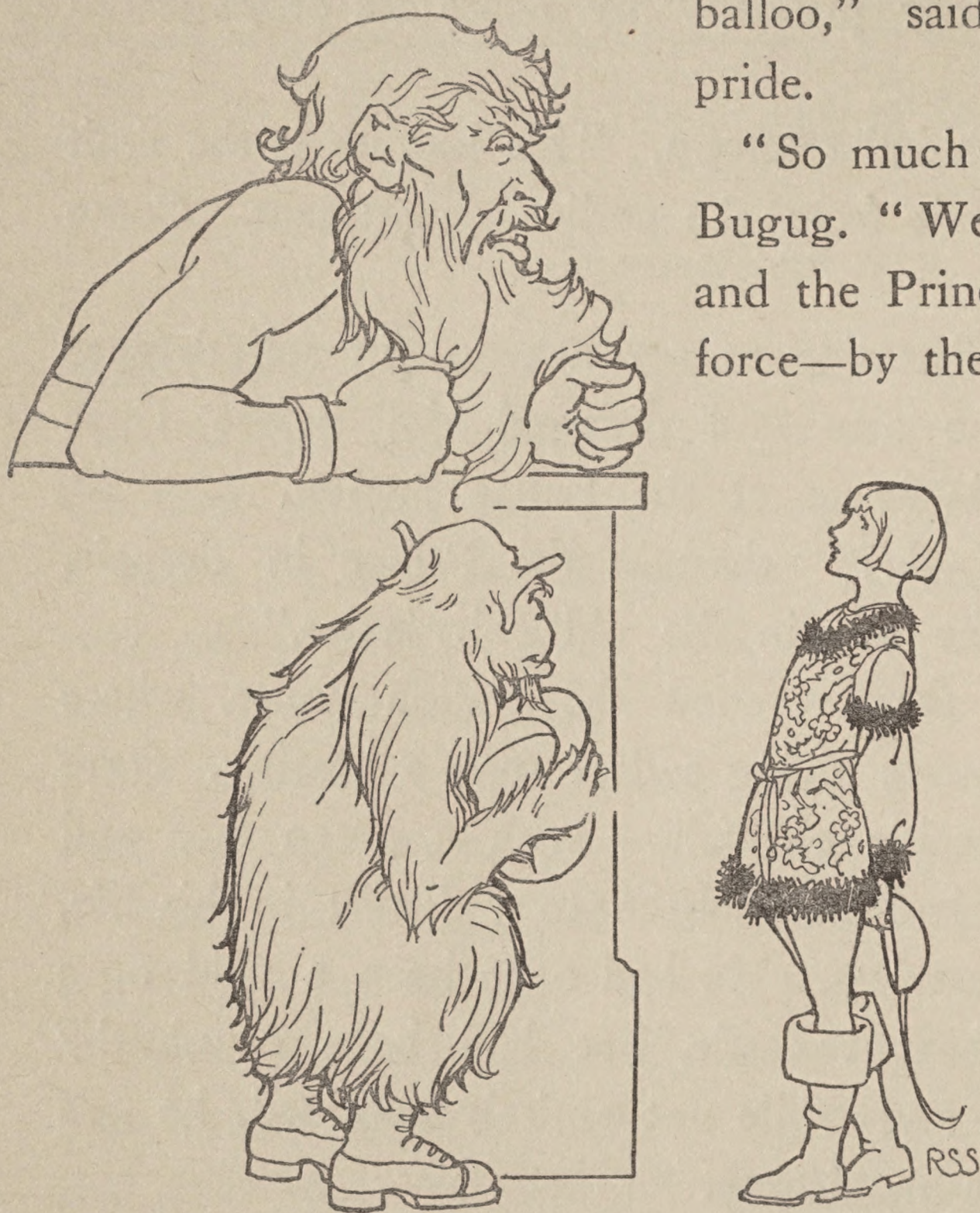
"Aha! a scorcher!" growled the reformed ogre. "Give him three weeks in solitary confinement."

"But I'm Prince Charming, the only son of King Hulla-balloo," said the prisoner with pride.

"So much the worse," shouted Bugug. "We'll make it six weeks," and the Prince was carried off by force—by the entire force in fact,

for the Ictopu was the only active policeman in the Kingdom. First, however, the ogre took away his boots and magic cap so that he could not escape.

Down four flights of dark steps, one turn to the right and another to the left brought them to the grated door, opening



CHARMING IS BROUGHT BEFORE THE OGRE

into a very gloomy room, and Charming was thrown in as though he were the son of a knave instead of King.

Oh, dear, what a terrible thing it was to be locked up in that dark cell in a still darker cellar, with nothing to eat



but bread and water, and with rats for company! There was no use in crying, for no one would have heard him and unless one has a good audience, crying is a useless waste of time and tears. Charming sat with his head in his hands, wondering what the old heroes would have done in such a predicament. There was a small candle in a candle-stick on the table—the only thing that cast any light on the subject.

After an hour of loneliness, the Prince began to amuse himself by emptying his pockets, and presently found the gold four-leaf-clover his mother had given him. Perhaps if he rubbed it something would happen. He had read of such cases. Fairy tale heroes often found help by rubbing rings and other magic articles. He rubbed it carefully while he prayed, “O good Fairy Papillion, come and help your poor god-child.”

He had hardly spoken before the wick began to glow. A soft 16-candle-power light spread through the gloomy cell, and from the very center of the floor he saw arise a beautiful figure like a butterfly with glistening wings. Gradually it took the form of a lovely little woman, who said in the sweetest voice:

“Who calls me? I am the Fairy Papillion.”

“O, dear Fairy Papillion, I’m so glad you’ve come,” said the boy eagerly. “Don’t you know me? I’m Prince Charming.”

“My, how you’ve grown since I saw you last,” said the Fairy, while she, too, kept growing until she was about four



feet eight, the usual height for Fairies. "But what are you doing here?"

The Prince told the Fairy everything. "I'm so sorry I got caught," he sobbed. "I'll never do it again."

"Getting caught is serious," said the Fairy. "Well, never mind, accidents will happen, especially when you try for the first time to save enchanted Princesses with nothing but an F. C. S. experience."

"Some one has got to save them," said the Prince, "or there wouldn't be any Fairy Tales. But how can I save myself?"

"By flying out, my dear," said the Fairy.

"But how? I have no flying machine."

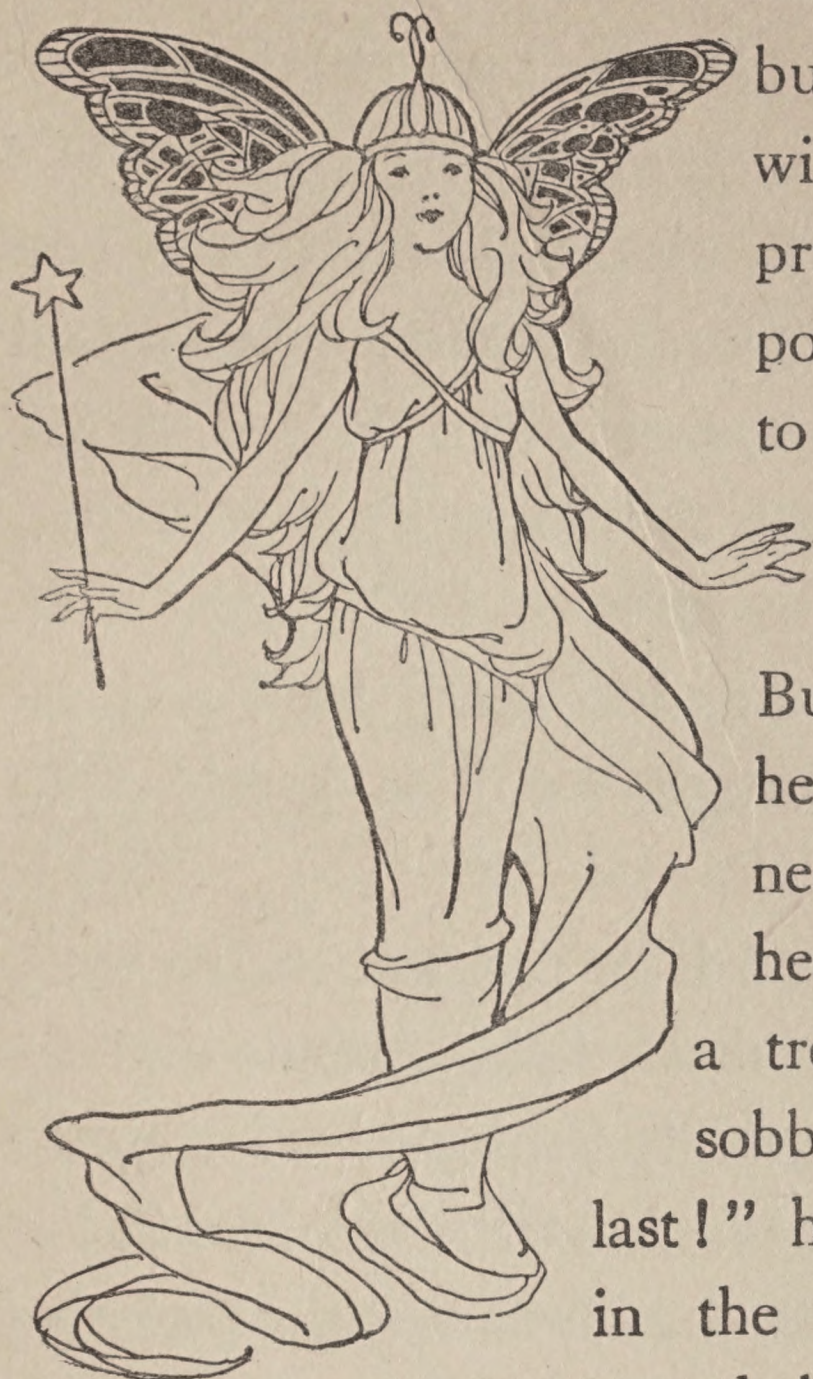
"Come, I'll show you how," cried the Fairy. She tapped him on the back with her wand, and before he knew it, wings had begun to sprout between his shoulder blades, and he commenced soaring about. It was as easy as swimming.

"Very good," said the Fairy. "You're doing splendidly. Keep it up. Good bye. If you need me, just say Simsolerimbimbaselamidusseldolirim!"

As she pronounced the magic word, Fairy Papillion disappeared through the floor as she had come, leaving a beautiful perfume behind her, while Charming, stretching his wings, flew out of the little window of his cell into the open air.

It was delightful to be able to fly after being kept in such a dark place. The Prince flapped his wonderful wings and flew hither and thither like a big bird. He peered into all the





THE FAIRY APPEARS

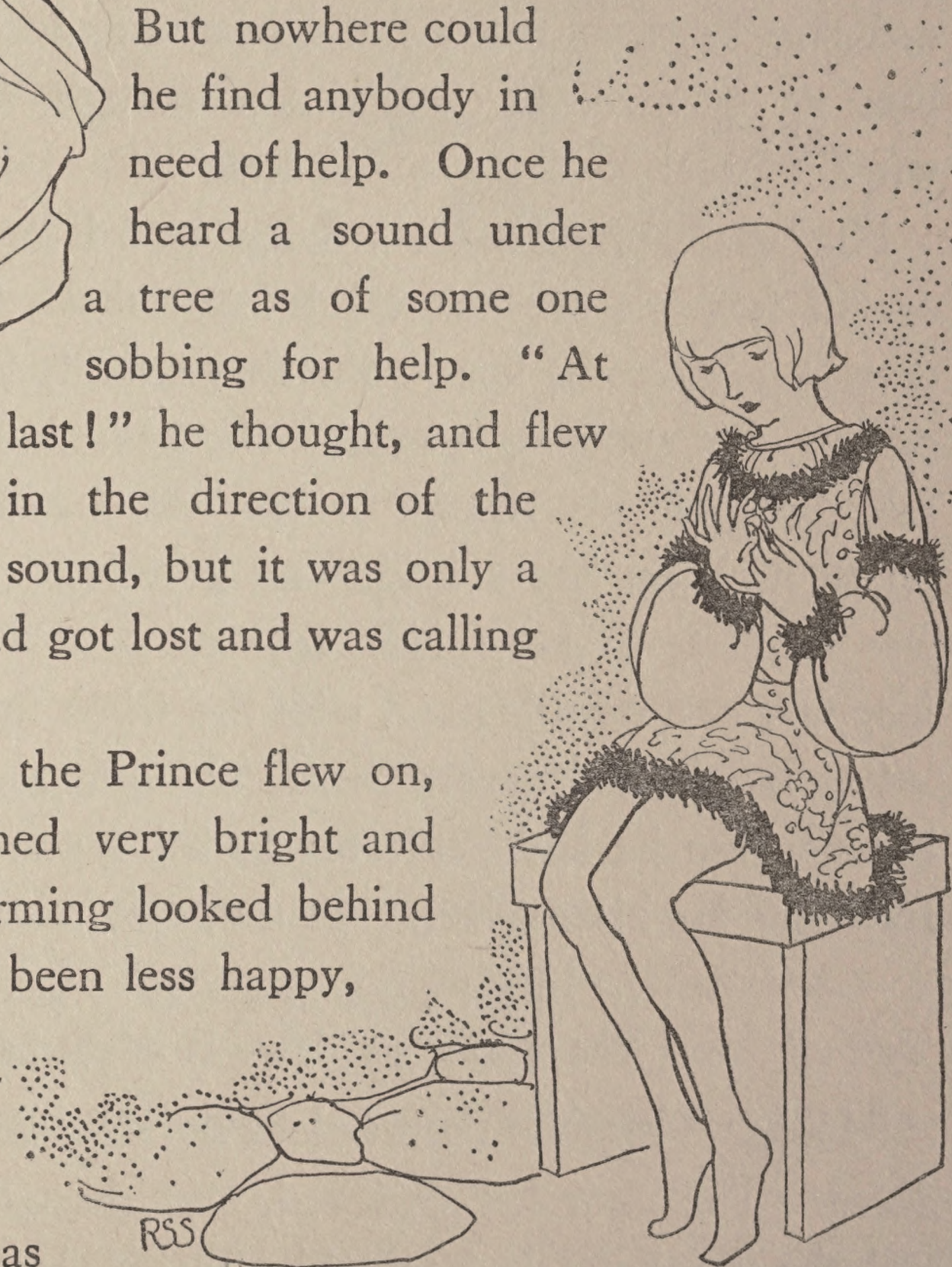
bushes and looked into every castle window in hopes of finding some poor princess in need of help. He composed a nice speech which he meant to make when he found her, such as,

“Dear Princess, will you fly with me and be my own little birdie?”

But nowhere could he find anybody in need of help. Once he heard a sound under a tree as of some one sobbing for help. “At last!” he thought, and flew in the direction of the sound, but it was only a

baby dragon that had got lost and was calling its mother.

So the hours and the Prince flew on, and the world seemed very bright and cheerful. Had Charming looked behind him, he would have been less happy, for flying only a few feet away was old Dame Gadzooks, as mean an old witch as





ever lived. King Cole kept her in his kingdom principally to frighten naughty children with, and at that sort of thing she was a great success. Parents would say to their children, "If you don't behave, I'll call Dame Gadzooks," and naturally they would be as good as gold. She had never met a real Prince in her life, and as soon as she saw the boy she knew by his clothes, and the ease with which he flew, that he must be different from ordinary boys, so she made up her mind to catch him, and eat him as soon as he got plump enough, for it is a rule with witches never to eat thin children.

Now the way to catch a flying bird is to put salt on its wing or tail feathers, and the witch knew that a flying prince may be caught in the same way. She flew steadily behind him for a mile or two, and suddenly scattered a few pinches of a special kind of salt right on his slender wings. In a moment they shriveled up to nothing, like a spider on a red-hot shovel, and as there was nothing to keep him up, the poor Prince began to fall, fall, fall, at a terrible pace, with the witch following close behind.

"If I only had a parachute," thought the prince as he sank, but you see he had neglected to bring one along, and was now suffering for his neglect. As the wise poet remarked:

"Of all sad words of tongue or pen,  
The saddest are these, It might have been."

"Haha!" laughed the witch as he went down, and still further down. The poor lad shrieked, and thought of Fairy Papillion and the word she had told him to say, but he could remember



only the first two syllables, "Simsol—" but they were useless without the other twelve. Falling through the air is not half so pleasant as flying, as any balloonist can tell you. To save his life, the Prince

could not remember whether any Fairy Tale heroes had been

in such a fix,

or what they

did for it if they

were. There must be a

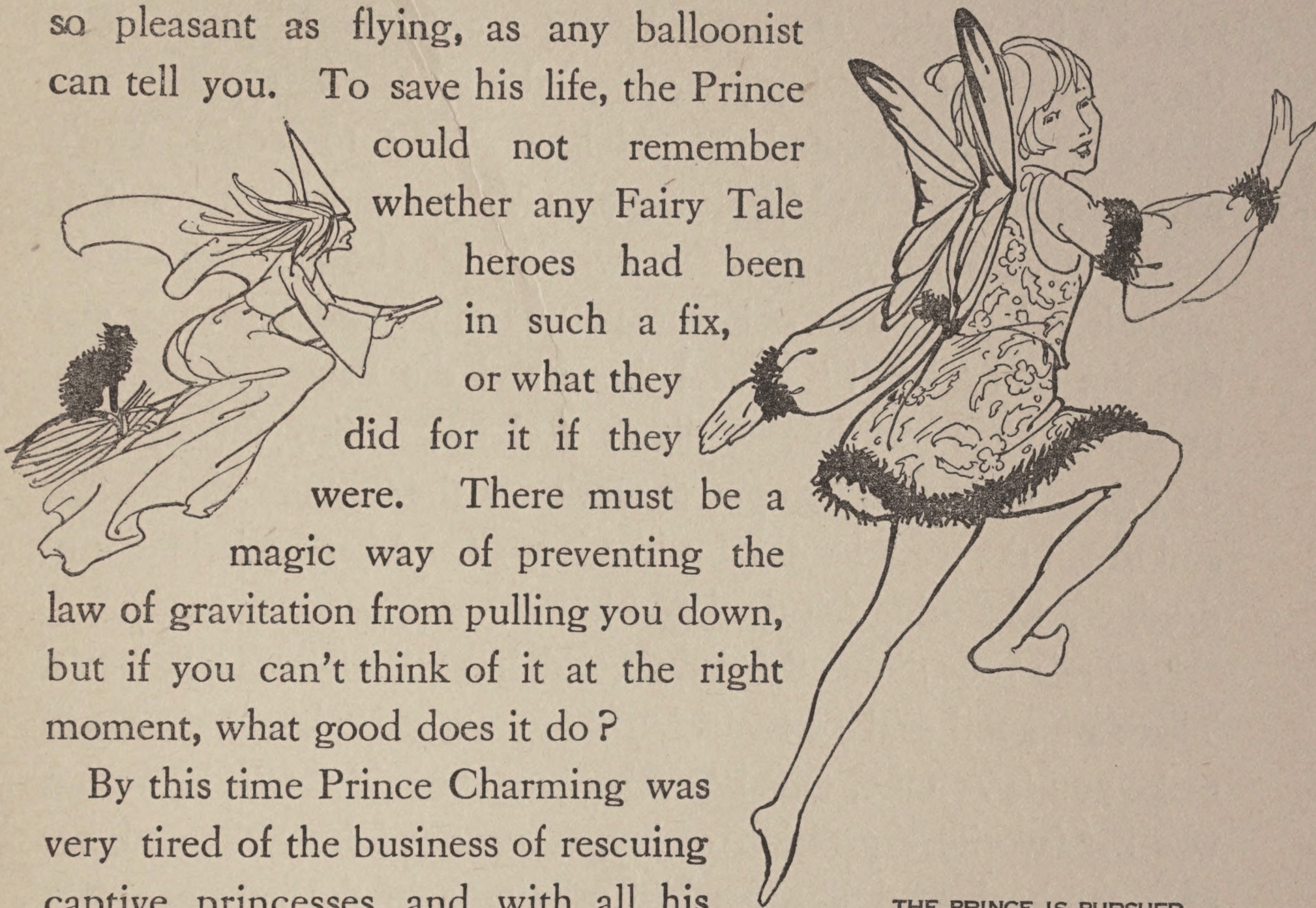
magic way of preventing the law of gravitation from pulling you down, but if you can't think of it at the right moment, what good does it do?

By this time Prince Charming was very tired of the business of rescuing captive princesses, and with all his heart wished he was back at the Hullaballoo castle, helping his mother eat bread and honey in the kitchen.

At length he reached the ground, right in the witch's back yard, and Dame Gadzooks pounced on him and held him fast.

"Oho!" she cried with an ugly leer. "My pretty boy! So I've got a real prince at last. I'll fatten you and eat you next Thanksgiving Day."

"That will be like Hansel and Grethel," thought the Prince,



THE PRINCE IS PURSUED



and at once he remembered how easily they managed to escape, by simply shoving that witch into the bake-oven. After that he wasn't a bit afraid. He knew he'd get away somehow. That's the advantage of knowing your fairy tales by heart.

"Come now," shouted the old hag. "Get to work. You'll have to chop wood and fatten my pigs for me, and if you don't do your duty, I'll let you feel the switch. Oho! you'll soon learn witch is switch." The old woman was so pleased with her pun that she said "Oho!" several times, and the Prince, being very polite, laughed too, but he didn't feel very happy for all that. So Prince Charming was put to work for the first time in his life, and to tell the truth he did not like it at all. After a whole day of drudgery Charming felt tired and hungry.

"Here's your dinner" cried the old hag; "a fine mess of eels. There's a good deal of nourishment in a good eel, and they will make you fat. Oho, Oho!" Whenever she said "Oho!" which was her favorite expression of joy, she grinned horribly, and her only tooth showed like a white milestone in the entrance of a dark cavern.

"I could stand everything" thought Charming, "if she only wouldn't make such horrible puns." After a while she turned her back and began to cook her own dinner in a big cauldron, while she sang in a cracked voice "Double, Double, Toil and Trouble," which she must have read somewhere in Shakespeare.

The witch had a monkey, a very intelligent animal, which had been sleeping with one eye open under the table. It now crawled



out and said to Charming in a whisper, "Do you want to escape, Prince?"

"I should think so," answered Charming. "But how? Can you help me?"

"Easily; all you have to do is to jump astride old Gadzooks broom in the corner, say 'Higgledy-piggledy,' and you fly right out of the window."

"No monkey business?" asked Charming.

"Oh no" replied the monkey. "Honor bright!"

With a bound Charming was astride the broom. "Higgledy-piggledy" he cried, and before the astounded witch had time to turn, he was off like a flash.

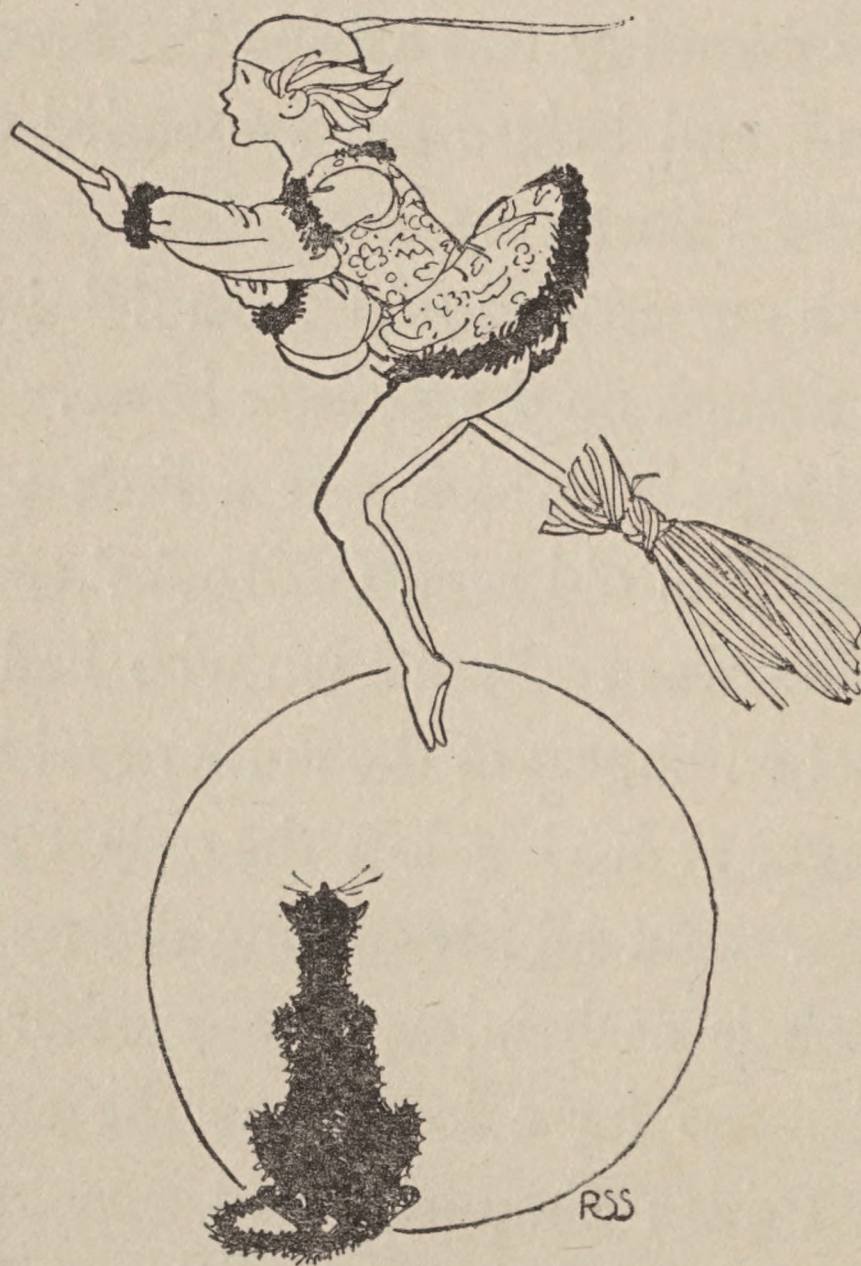
In vain the witch cursed and said "Oho!" in angry tones; the prince flew off as though on the swiftest horse. The broom had a habit of moving by jerks, which was a little uncomfortable, but anything was better than old Mrs. Gadzooks' company.

The monkey, who was really a man who had been turned into an ape by the cruel witch, sat in the corner and laughed, while the witch wept in anger at having lost the only Prince she had ever had in her clutches. But all her wailing did no good, for without her broom, a witch is as helpless as any other old woman, only more disagreeable. So for a long time she stood at the window and watched the Prince disappear, and smacked her lips when she thought what a good Thanksgiving dinner she had lost.

Then she took the monkey by the neck and gave him such a whack with her cane that he cried out with pain, and promised



never to help any more princes to escape. He kept his promise too, because a week later the witch, unable to get another broom, was obliged to out of the witchcraft business. She opened up a fortune-telling establishment on Main Street, and made lots of money telling people things that never came to pass, while the monkey got a good job at the Zoological Garden until Dr. Darwin came and turned him into a man.







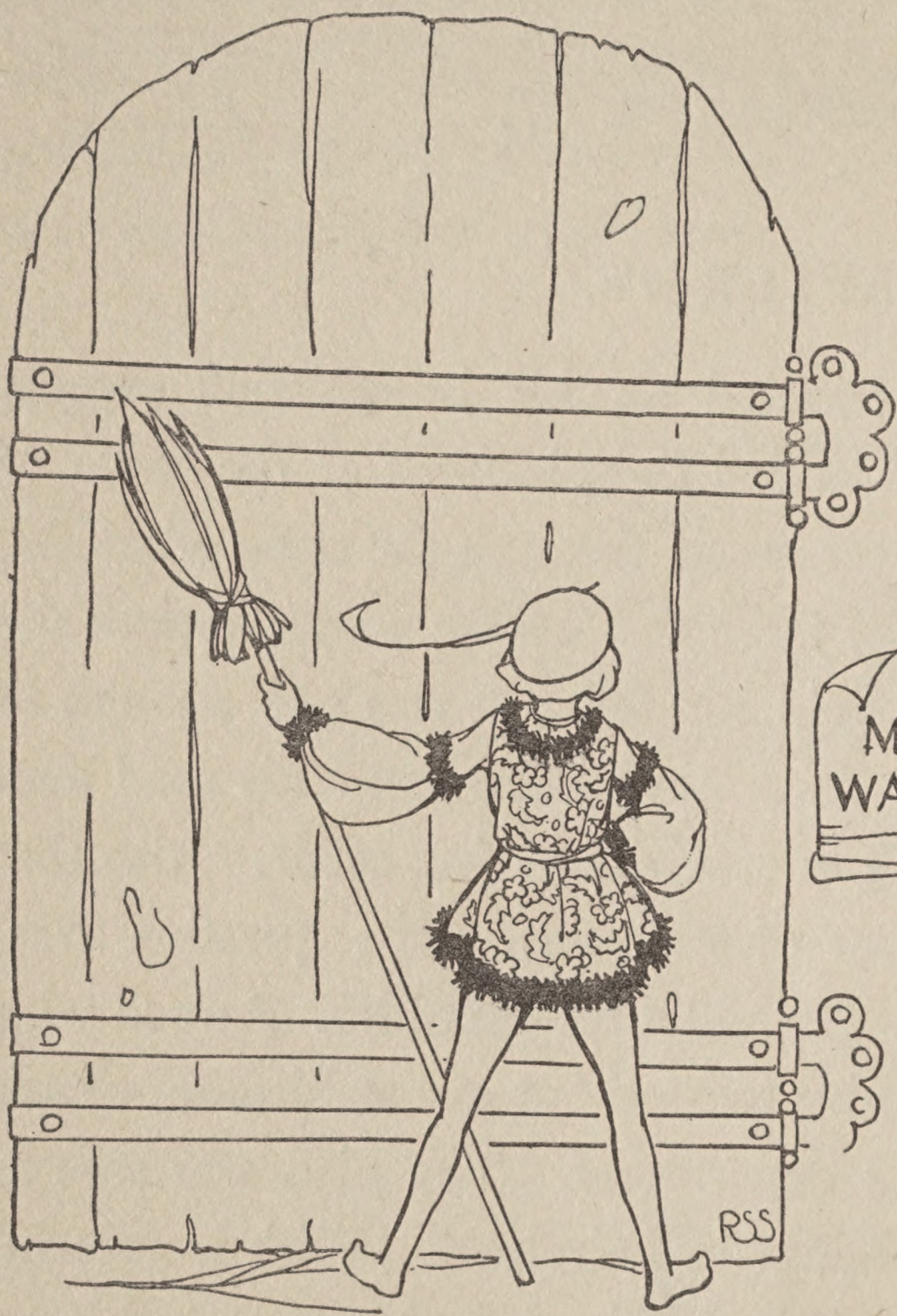
#### CHAPTER IV.

PRINCE CHARMING traveled on his broom-stick express for about an hour, and landed right in front of the castle of Old King Cole. He could hear music through the open windows, but whether it was the fiddlers three that usually played before the King, or a phonograph, he could not tell. It was bad enough to be almost anything. Prince Charming knew from his road map that there was a princess kept in captivity in that castle. Also that King Cole was very suspicious of strangers. The question was, how to get to that princess. He had a brilliant idea. Armed with the witch's broom, he could give himself out as a stableman, or ask for a position in the cleaning department. The plan was sure to work. It is so easy to fool Kings in Fairyland. With wonderful courage in one so young, the Prince seized the knocker and gave it a double rap, and called loudly, "Hi there! open the portal to an honest sweeper who seeks work!"

The Portcullis was at once lowered, a guard, armed to the teeth, with a full suit of papier-maché armor, probably borrowed from some museum or costumer, opened the gate and led the brave



youth to where the King sat on his throne. He was surrounded by his courtiers, his pages, his soothsayers, and other members of the Royal family. His fiddlers three sat in front of him playing



AN HONEST SWEEPER SEEKS WORK

“After the Ball” very badly indeed. King Cole was a jolly old soul and laughed at every thing and every body. His motto was laugh and grow fat, and he weighed nearly three hundred pounds. He

had been taking some anti-fat medicine recently that was advertised in the Daily Bragadocia, but as soon as he lost a pound he was so happy over his loss that he gained two, so the medicine was worse than useless.

“Ha!” cried the merry monarch, “What seeks this fellow here?”

“A place in the Royal White-wings department,” answered Charming.



The King mused for a while. "How would you like to clean out the stable?" he asked.

"Just what I want," answered Charming. "Ever since my cousin, Hercules, cleaned out the Augean stable, I have been eager to see what I could do."

"Well," laughed the King, "you are a rather handsome fellow for that kind of work, but the best is none too good for me. Get to work! It's the dirtiest stable you ever saw. Pompey, take him out to the barn." Then King Cole called for his pipe and his bowl and began to smoke and drink.

The stable really was a sight. In it the King kept the Cat that had been to London to see the Queen, the Cow with the crumpled horn, the Cow that jumped over the moon, and the Little Dog that laughed to see the sport, also the White Horse that carried the Lady to Banbury Cross, and the Pig that would not jump over the stile; and as the stablemen had struck for higher wages and shorter hours a month ago, the litter was something indescribable.

"Oh dear, what a mess!" sighed the Prince. "I wish I had never learned the trade." He began to apply the broom vigorously, when suddenly he heard a sound like a sob. He listened. It seemed to come from above,—no, from below,—no, from the left,—or perhaps from the right. At last he found a little locked door in the side of the stable, fastened with a Yale lock. One blow from the broom handle broke the lock and the door flew open, and Charming found himself in a sort of dungeon in which the



poor princess was kept captive. She was as surprised to see him as he was to see her. It was in fact a real surprise party without the usual refreshments.

The Princess, whose name was Fi-fi, and who had beautiful blonde hair, and a sad, sweet smile, took him by the hand and bade him welcome. "So you are the man who is to sweep out the stable," she said softly. "Goodness knows it needs it. While you are about it you might give this dungeon a little cleaning too. It hasn't been dusted since I was brought here six years ago."

"Oh, dearest Fi-fi, haven't you guessed?" asked the Prince, as he sank on his knees before her. "I'm not a cleaner at all, but Prince Charming, the only son of King Hullabaloo, and I've come to save you. You want to be saved, don't you?"

"Oh yes! More than anything in the world," sighed the Princess. "But how will you do it? The gates are all guarded by armed men, and a Dinosaur is chained in the back yard."

"Trust in me, dear Fi-fi. I'll tell you a secret. My broom is an aeroplane in disguise. Once on it, say Higgledy-piggledy, and you will fly with ease."

Her beautiful eyes beamed on him as she got astride the broom. "Good-bye, dear Prince," said Fi-fi sweetly. Then she murmured Higgledy-piggledy, and the broom began to move toward the window.

"Wait for me," exclaimed the Prince. "I'm going too."

"Oh no, dear. I'm afraid the broom won't hold two. It's such





PRINCE CHARMING MEETS THE WITCH









"GOOD BYE, DEAR."

a small thin broom. They make them stronger nowadays. Besides, I prefer to go alone."

"But see here," argued the Prince, "I came to rescue you and marry you. It's the way in the Fairy books you know."

"I'm sorry to throw any doubt on the Fairy books," whispered Fi-fi with her sad, sweet smile, "but I'm going to marry Prince Tulip of Dinkeyland. We've been engaged for over thirty years. Take care you don't get your pretty clothes soiled in the stable, and

don't go too near the dog. He bites. Good bye, dear."

She waved her soft, white hand, turned the speed lever a little further, and sailed out of the window, leaving the Prince behind in tears!

"Oh dear, what shall I do?" he cried. "Nothing seems to happen as it did in the days of old."

After a while the King sent Gog, his Prime Minister, over to the stable to see how the new man was getting along, for he said,



"While a new broom usually sweeps clean, a new man needs watching." Gog found him in tears, but the broom and the Princess were both elsewhere.

"Well," cried Gog the Prime Minister ferociously. "What's this? Nothing done yet? And the secret door opened? Where's Fi-fi?"

"She's gone," cried the Prince. "Gone to marry Prince Tulip."

"What!" roared Gog. "You've allowed her to escape. Do you know the penalty for this act?" Charming said he didn't know, but he had an idea it was something pretty bad.

"One year in the torture chamber," cried Gog, "although most people die after the first week. Come to his Majesty!" Gog seized the poor culprit by the collar and dragged him before the King.

When his Majesty heard what had happened, his anger was worth coming many miles to see. He turned green and yellow with rage, (green and yellow were the Royal colors). He waved his sceptre, gnashed his teeth, and jumped from his throne with such force that he broke three of the springs in the seat.

"What!" he cried, "Fi-fi escaped? My own sweet Fi-fi, whom I meant to marry as soon as she had got used to me. What shall I do? What shall I do?"

Charming was about to suggest that he might advertise in the *Daily Bragadocia* for another captive princess, when the



King cried in growing anger, "Take him away. Down to the torture chamber in the lowest depths of the castle."

They dragged Charming through several miles of underground subways, threw him into a cell, and left him to his fate. At this rate he would soon get used to prisons.

The Prince found the torture chamber different from what he had expected. It was a small room, but not at all dismal, and he thought that he might be able to hold out until the end of his sentence. But he soon found out his mistake, for every day a new kind of torture was introduced, each more horrible than the one before.

On the third day, for instance, he had to listen to the music of a pianola. It played only one piece—The Merry Skiddo Waltz—and as the instrument was out of tune, the misery the Prince endured was awful. The next day a purple goblin with a cracked voice came and read over a thousand jokes from Punch. At first Charming laughed a little, but the jokes grew worse and worse until he swooned away in agony. The next day they opened a tube in the wall, and through this he heard the hideous noises of the great city, and the rumble and roar of the elevated and subway trains, the clanging and rattling of the trolley cars, the honking and tooting of automobiles, and a thousand other terrible sounds, and they almost made him deaf. And so for over a week the style of torture was changed daily, and Charming felt that he could not hold out much longer.

How could he escape? What would Jack the Giant Killer



have done in a similar fix? He might cut off the head of the next intruder, or overpower him and cast him into the castle moat, or flatter him into killing himself. Those were all good ways, at least in the story books, but in reality they were not so easy to do. There was another way so simple that Charming wondered why he hadn't thought of it before.

That evening when Gog, the Prime Minister, came as usual with the supper, a nice piece of hard bread and a sparkling tin cup of water, the Prince crouched behind the door. As soon as the Prime Minister was well in the cell, Charming shot out, and slamming the door, made his jailer a prisoner. A turn of the key in the lock, and the deed was complete.

"Ha ha," laughed the Prince through the key hole.

"Let me out," cried the Prime Minister, "or I'll break every bone in your body."

"You'll have to catch me first," said Charming. "Give my love to his Majesty, and his Majesty's mother-in-law, and his fiddlers three, and all the rest of the royal family."

In vain Gog pounded and threatened. He could not escape. Charming went down the path to the left, and then to the right, and up three flights of stairs to the garden. "What they need is an elevator," he said. "When I get to be King I'll introduce some needed prison reforms. Prisons are anything but a pleasure nowadays."

When he was out in the street, he wondered which way to go in order to escape from King Cole's country, for to tell the truth





THE DINOSAURUS CHASES CHARMING

he was heartily sick of the adventures he had had up till now, and felt sure that King Bunko, whose land lay ten miles further north, would give him a friendlier reception.

On a tree he saw a sign which read: "Escaped Prisoners take the left-hand path."

"How kind of them," said Charming, "to point out the way." But on thinking it over, he wasn't so sure that it was a kindness—rather a kind of unkindness, for said he, "If I take the left it may not be right, whereas if I take the right, I may be left. However, as two rights don't make a wrong any more than two wrongs make a right, I'll turn to the right twice and risk it."

He had gone about the length of three city blocks, and had reached the edge of a dense forest in which ham-trees, axletrees, and whiffletrees grew in bewildering profusion, when he heard a terrible growling behind him. He turned around and saw a sight that made his hair stand on end.



His escape had no doubt been discovered, for the Dinosaur which King Cole kept chained in the back yard had been sent out after him. Now a Dinosaur, as anyone knows who has had anything to do with the animal, is not a pleasant beast even when in good humor, and is doubly disagreeable when it is hungry for a mouthful of princely flesh. It is a lucky thing that most of its family were killed off by the flood, and that it is usually to be found a fossil in rocks where it can't do much harm. How this one managed to survive, I cannot tell, but there it was, tearing after Charming at the rate of a mile a minute, with its mouth wide open, and its tail up in the air.

It was its very speed which saved Charming and became the cause of its own destruction, for the Prince suddenly darted behind a large rock, and the gigantic beast, unable to stop in its mad flight, plunged right into a river which flowed half a mile further on, and being unable to swim, and too clumsy to crawl out, it sank to the bottom, and will no doubt some day turn into a fossil and be exhibited in a museum of Natural History. It will serve the beast just right, and I for one think that it is the only place where a Dinosaur should show himself.

Charming's troubles were not yet over. The rock behind which he had hidden formed the entrance to a cave, and the Prince fell headlong down a sharp decline to the bottom. What was his fright when he found himself looking into the eyes of a big brown bear. And, if it must be told, the bear was just as much scared as Charming, for he first thought it was a goblin,



and as he had never heard of a goblin, he was terribly frightened.

"I beg your pardon," said the Prince politely. "I didn't mean to fall on you so suddenly."

"Don't mention it," said the other just as politely, "I'll try to bear with your company for a while."

"Then you won't eat me up?" asked Charming.

"Certainly not," said the bear. "The Doctor has forbidden my eating meat because it makes me nervous. I live principally on great-nuts, malted horn-flakes, and other advertised health foods."

"Would you mind telling me who you are?" asked the Prince, knowing how fond most bears were of talking about themselves.

"I'm Bruin," said the bear, "the original father of all the Teddy Bears. You may have heard of me."

"Why certainly, I



CHARMING MEETS BRUIN



know your whole family," said Charming, now feeling entirely at his ease. "You are the Bear at whose house Golden Locks slept that night."

"Exactly. Dear little Golden Locks, I felt so sorry she ran away just as we were beginning to enjoy her society. I am also the bear in Beauty and the Beast."

"Why, I heard that he had been changed back into a Prince."

"Oh no. That was just an invention of Mr. Grimm, who wrote my biography. It sounded better in the Fairy Tale. Now who are you, if I may ask?"

Charming told his sad story.

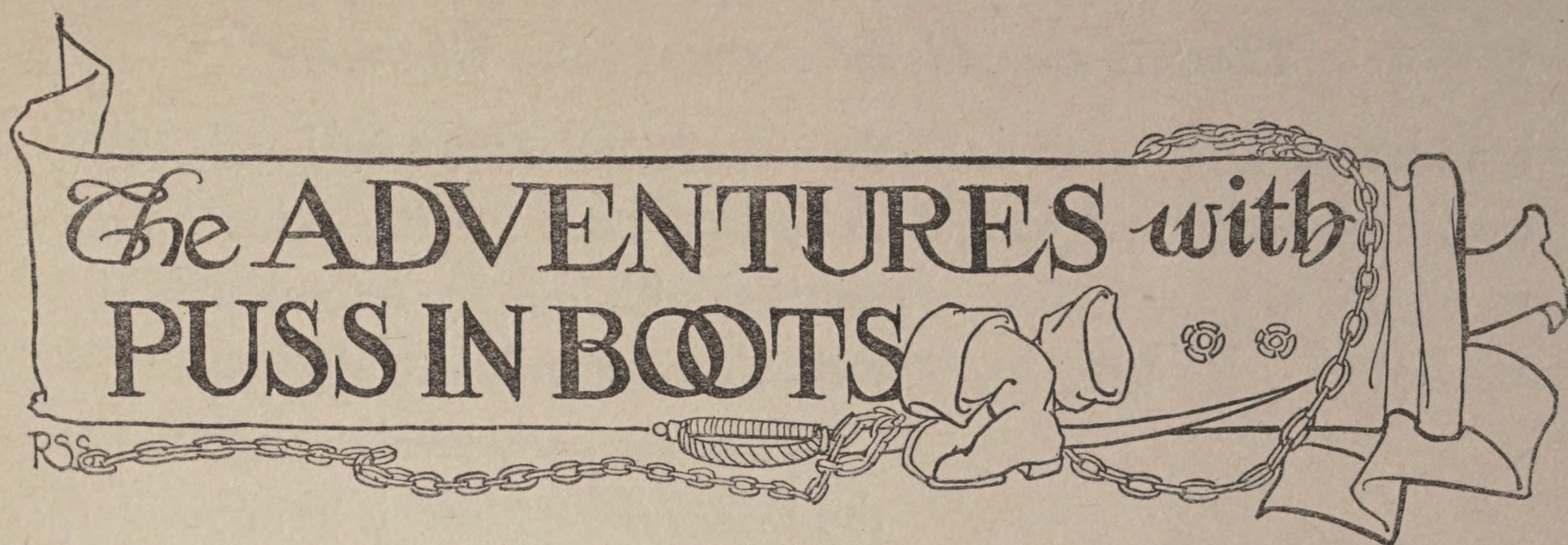
"Well, well, boys will be boys," said Bruin. "But you must be hungry. What will you have for supper?"

For a vegetarian, the bear set a very nice table. The principal dishes were eggs and honey and shredded malt cake, and they tasted very nice to Charming, who was hungry after his long imprisonment.

Then Bruin made up a couch of straw for the Prince, and covered him up with a big woolly rug, which he said was all that remained to remind him of poor Mrs. Bruin, who lost her life a year or so ago by accidentally getting in the way of a bullet fired at her by some King or President.

Charming slept very well indeed, and dreamed that the bear and the Dinosaur were dancing a waltz while the three fiddlers of old King Cole were playing the music of The Merry Skiddo.





# *The* ADVENTURES *with* PUSS IN BOOTS

## CHAPTER V.

NEXT DAY the Prince continued his travels. His path lay along the Aqua River (which as you know, if you've ever studied Fairy Geography, runs through the land of Weissnichtwo), and he felt very, very sad.

"I wonder how it is," he said to himself, "that nothing happens to me as it ought to. All the heroes that I ever read about found things just as they expected, and always met a good fairy ready to help them out of trouble, whereas I—Oh, what's this coming?" He looked in surprise, for the new comer, while it looked like a little boy from a distance, was really a big cat with a great pair of boots on.

"How are you Prince?" said the cat cheerfully. "Don't you know me? I'm Puss in Boots. You've surely heard of me, and my master, the Marquis of Carabas."

"Oh, of course," replied the Prince with a smile. "Everybody knows about you."

"I should hope so," replied the cat. "I'm the one that made the B. L. Bugless \$3.50 shoes famous, but I've since changed my



brand and now wear only the 'Stalk-under' \$3.00 hand-sewed welt and reinforced straps. The best boot for the price in the market, with money refunded if the welt wears out before the sole."

"How perfectly lovely!" exclaimed the Prince. "How is your master, the Marquis, and his wife?"

The cat turned his eyes up, then down, then twirled his mustache and pursed his mouth as though in doubt as to whether he should tell all he knew. At length he asked, "Can you keep a secret?"

"To be sure. Keeping secrets is my specialty," replied the Prince.

"Cross your heart?" asked Puss.

"Honor Bright!" replied the Prince.

"Well then," and the cat drew nearer till his mustache tickled Charming's ear, and whispered,

"They're not at all happy."

"Indeed, why not?"

"Well, you know my master wasn't a Marquis at all. That was a little story of mine. He was only a miller's son. While he was bathing, you remember, I hid his old clothes, and called out to the



PUSS IN BOOTS



King and his friends, who were just passing, 'My master, the Marquis of Carabas, is drowning!' The king sent his men to pull him out, and brought him fine clothing, and took him home in their 6 cylinder, 45 horse-power touring-car. Next day my master married the princess."

"Yes, I remember. Go on!"

"Well," said Puss, "my master never quite forgot his plebian habits. He eats with his knife, pours coffee into his saucer and tucks his napkin under his collar."

"How awfully shocking!" cried the Prince with a shudder.

"Then, too, he swears just like a miller."

"Do millers swear differently from other people?" asked the Prince.

"Bless you, yes! When a miller says 'Dam,' he means the water-course that runs his mill—so he has to use a stronger word when he is in a temper."

"You mean out of temper," corrected Prince Charming. "Go on."

"His wife is peculiar too, but what can you expect from a princess who is taken in by such a silly story as the one I invented for the Marquis of Carabas?" Then after a pause Puss asked, "What can I do for you, Prince? I shall be happy to serve you."

"Well," said Charming, "You see I am out trying to find a Princess to save and to marry. So far I've had no luck at all. Perhaps you can help me."

"Why of course I can. I know the very thing for you. There's



Princess Melissande, the daughter of King Joco of Bohemia. She was captured by a band of gipsies some years ago, and has since been kept chained in a cavern in the forest over yonder. They call her the Bohemian Girl, and she's known for her beautiful voice and the way she sings, 'I dreamed that I dwelt in marble halls.' She's been singing that song for years and all the people round about know it by heart."

"That's very interesting," said Charming, "but how can I get to her?"

"Nothing easier. We'll go to the forest at once. Turn your coat inside out and make a noise like a gipsy. Ask for a night's shelter in camp. When the gipsies are asleep, I'll steal into the cave and unfasten the chains that bind the poor girl. When I give you the signal, namely three scratches with my left paw on my right ear, you can enter the cave and carry her off."



"But if we fail?" asked Charming, trembling with excitement.

"Fail?" said the cat with contempt. "Young man, in the bright lexicon of fairy land, there is no such word as fail."

"I don't know about that," answered Charming. "It seems to be the regular thing with me."

"Courage" said the cat. "Follow me," and he ran on ahead.

It was the easiest thing imaginable to get into the gipsies' camp. They seemed to expect the Prince, and before he was there ten





THE GYPSY CAMP

minutes, they had told his fortune, read his palm, and had taken all his money and his gold scarf pin. Charming never felt so thoroughly at home as he did with this genial band.

Every now and then the Bohemian Girl in the cave could be heard clanging her chains and singing, "I dreamed that I dwelt in marble halls," in a way that would have brought tears to the eyes of any opera-goer. The song began thus:

"I dreamed that I dwelt in marble halls,  
'Twas cold and the steam pipes had busted,



The icicles hung on the whitewashed walls  
In vain in the plumber we'd trusted."

"How she must suffer," thought Charming, "but her troubles will soon be over, and with me as her husband, she will forget the awful past."

Supper around the camp fire with the jolly gipsies was a very enjoyable affair. Most of the eatables had just been taken from the neighboring farmyards an hour before, and were strictly fresh.

"We don't like canned vegetables," explained the Gipsy Chief. "We take our food as we find it."

Puss in Boots took no part in the supper, but was playing Puss-in-the-corner all to himself, and pretending to be sleeping. Suddenly he arose cautiously and went into the darkness.

"He is going to release the Princess," thought Charming. After singing and dancing for an hour or two, the Gipsies wrapped themselves up in their blankets and were soon asleep. Charming waited for Puss to give the signal that all was ready, but Puss came not. Something was wrong. The hours flew by and yet Puss did not return. Had the cat met with an accident? Unable to bear the suspense any longer, Charming crept out on tip-toe and went towards the cave, where he could still hear the poor captive clanging her chains and singing in a low, sad, monotonous voice.

He had not gone far before he heard a faint "Meow." It was Puss. But where? It was so dark that one couldn't see one's hair behind one's head.



"Puss, where are you?" whispered Charming.

"Here," said Puss. "I'm caught in a trap by my tail and can't get out."

"But how did it happen?"

"I could a tale unfold," said Puss, "if I could only unfold my own tail. You see, just as I was going to release the Bohemian Girl, a mouse ran across my path—such a delicious, juicy-looking mouse! I ran after her right into this trap. Please get me out."

Charming with some difficulty opened the trap and released his friend and together they went to the cave.

"Now," said the cat, "I'll go in and undo the chains, and when she staggers out, catch her in your arms, lift her on the Chief's horse, which is tied to that telegraph pole over yonder, and bear her off as quickly as you can. I'll join you later down by the river."

The brave cat crept into the cave, and Charming heard the creaking of rusty locks and the falling of the chains. His heart beat fast! At last success seemed in his grasp

The Princess came out slowly and cautiously, and Charming put his arms lovingly about her.

"Fear not, lovely Melissande! It is I, Prince Charming, your future husband," he whispered.

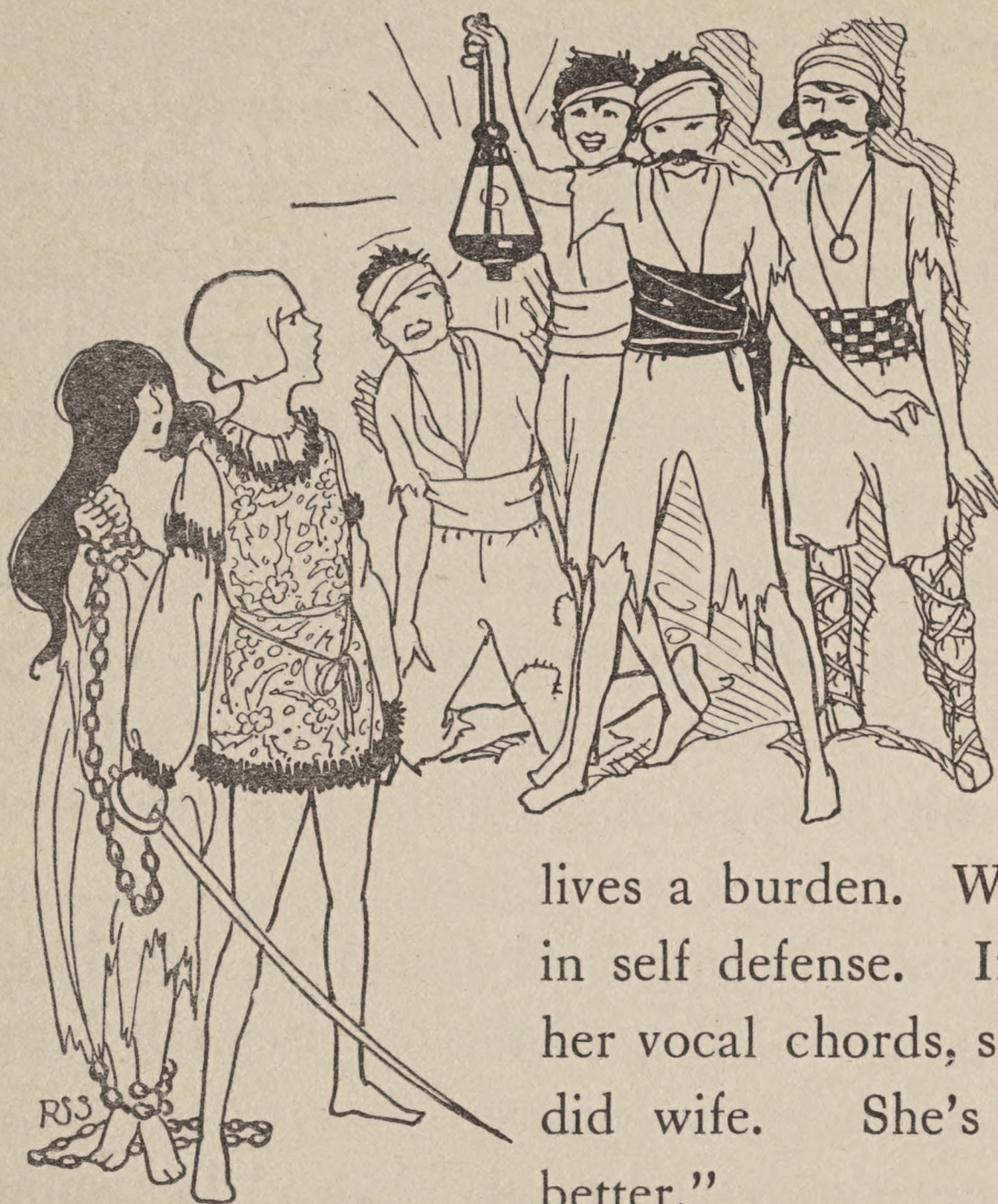
"Oh I'm so glad," she replied. "I've waited for you so long; more than fifty years."

Suddenly there was a great noise. The gipsies had awakened and were coming to the cave. They carried torches and lanterns.



Charming seized a stout stick. He meant to defend his Princess with his life if necessary.

"Come on," he cried bravely, "I fear you not! Melissande shall be mine."



"To be sure," replied the Chief. "We congratulate you! We've been waiting for years for some one to take her off our hands. Ever since Balfe, the composer, wrote that song for her, she's made our

lives a burden. We had to chain her up in self defense. If you can only remove her vocal chords, she'll make you a splendid wife. She's old enough to know better."

"COME ON," HE CRIED

Charming grasped a torch and holding it before Melissande's features, looked at her. Ye gods and little fishes!—What a face! She was at least sixty-five, weighed 265 pounds, and was as ugly as a—well it's hard to say just how ugly she was.

"I beg your pardon," said Charming, confused. "I'm afraid I've made a mistake. It was all the cat's fault," and dashing down



the torch, he fled through the forest as fast as his legs could carry him, while far behind he heard the shrieking of the princess and the laughter of the gipsies.

When he was too tired to run farther, he sat down to rest. Presently he heard the voice of Puss in Boots.

“How now, Master! I’m sorry—” began the cat.

But Charming was in no humor for conversation. He took the cat by the back of the neck, and twirling it around his head, he hurled it far out into the Aqua River that flows through the land of Weissnichtwo, and as that cat never came back, it is safe to assume that its nine lives were lost in the black river that night. Then Charming wandered on, sad and dejected, wondering what would happen next.







## CHAPTER VI.

**H**E HAD NOT gone far when he heard a loud peal of laughter, and looking around he saw upon the grass a jolly looking fellow in cap and bells, who waved him a merry welcome.

"Hello," cried Charming. "Was that laugh yours?"

"Yes," replied the other. "I should smile. Allow me to introduce myself. I'm Rigolo Funniboy, the Jester."

Now in Fairy Land no kingly court is complete without a jester, and Rigolo was well known all over the world for his wonderful wit. He was born with so large a funny bone that people came for miles to look at him. While still a boy, he wrote several books on "Wit and Humor," and often got as much as two golden coins for jokes that he sent to the weekly newspapers. He was the author of that marvelously funny riddle, "When is a door not a door? When it is a jar!" and several patent medicine almanacs were edited by him. Charming was very glad to meet him.

"I'm sure we shall be friends," said he. "Do you know of any Princess that wants to be rescued?"



"Sure Mike!" replied the Jester. (That was a sample of his wit). "Right over yonder is King Chico's shanty. There's a lovely Princess dying to be saved."

"Dying," asked Charming in grieved surprise. "Let's hasten to her rescue."

"Exactly," replied the jester, "dyeing her hair.

You see she was a blonde originally, but that's no longer stylish. Come, I'll show you the way."

They crossed a bridge, tramped through a forest, climbed over a hill, and presently came to King Chico's palace. A moment later they had reached the door, and on sending in their cards they were admitted to the Royal Presence. King Chico and the beautiful Princess



THE JESTER

Dodo sat in the throne room, and seemed awfully glad to see them. Chico had on a new crown which the royal jeweller had just brought him, and looked very swell. When the King heard that Charming was the son of King Hullabaloo, he was greatly pleased.

"I whipped your father when he was a boy," he mumbled.



"That was forty years ago. Well! Well! It seems but yesterday. Dear me, how time flies! And this is the celebrated Rigolo Funniboy, the Jokesmith. How often I have laughed at that joke of yours, 'When is a nose not a nose? When it is a little reddish.' Ha, ha, ha! It's the funniest thing I ever heard. It might have been a little turn-up, but reddish is better. Ha, ha! Well you are both welcome as long as you don't try to borrow any money from me. The royal exchequer is in the hands of a receiver. It's awful to be poor! Princess, see that two extra plates are put on the table, and some water is added to the soup. We don't often have such welcome guests for lunch."

Charming was delighted with this cordial reception, and cast loving eyes at the beautiful princess, wondering how he could tear her from the arms of the kingly villain.

"You'll have to take pot luck," said Princess Dodo. "Our cook lady left yesterday and we have to do the best we can."

"That's all right," replied the jester with wonderful wit. "If we can't make both ends meat, we will make one end vegetables."

Whereat they all laughed till the tears ran down their faces.

After dinner, which was really very bad, for the broth was salty, and the goulash was burned, and the cake soggy, King Chico invited Charming to sit on the newly upholstered throne next to Princess Dodo, while Rigolo gave free vent to his wonderful wit. How they did laugh. He was such a funny fellow. One of his jokes especially, "Why does a chicken go across the street? To get on the other side," was screamingly funny.



"I shall split my sides laughing," said the King when he could get his breath.

"Then run till you get a stitch in the side," replied the merry



THE KING WELCOMES THE PRINCE AND THE JESTER

jester, and they all had to laugh again until the windows rattled. The merriment was at its height when a messenger with a blanched face and trembling knees broke into the room.

"Your M-m-m-Majesty," he stuttered.



“What means this interruption?” quoth the king sternly.  
“Can’t you see that we are enjoying ourselves?”

“Th - th - the - gi - gi - ant.”

“This man speaks broken English,” said Rigolo. “Does he always break his word like this?”

“If you can’t say it, sing it,” thundered the King.

The messenger, who had a good wheel-barrow-tone of voice, thereupon sang,

“The giant has broke loose again,  
And swallowed up a dozen men.”

“What!” shouted his majesty. “Will no one kill the monster? I will give the hand of the beautiful Princess Dodo to the man who rids my kingdom of the giant Hurdygurdy!”

It was one of the tricks of King Chico to offer the hand of Dodo to any one who carried out his wishes, but having a shrewd lawyer attached to his court, he always found a way to break his contract. Charming didn’t know this, however, and in his innocence at once came forward. “Your Majesty,” he said, “I will slay the giant and claim the princess.”

“You?” exclaimed the King in surprise. “This giant has two heads, and he would eat you alive in just two mouthfuls, one for each head.”

“I’m not afraid. Give me a sword and some giant powder, and let Rigolo come with me to complete the deadly work with his wit, and I will sally forth at once.”

Rigolo sang “Sally in our Alley” as the most fitting song for





"I SHALL SPLIT MY SIDES LAUGHING," SAID THE KING.

the occasion, while Charming girded on the King's sword, and tucked away in his pocket a couple of sticks of dynamite which had been left over when the workmen were blasting under the palace for the new subway. He took a fond leave of the princess, kissed the hand that he felt was soon to be his, while Dodo smiled through her tears, and so our heroes went forth to conquer or die.



The giant Hurdygurdy lived in a cave under the hill two miles out of the city near the subway station. Any good police commissioner with half a dozen plain-clothes men could have raided the place easily, but so great was the terror the giant inspired that no one had the courage to go nearer to the cave than half a mile. As Charming and Rigolo drew near they heard the giant singing in a voice like thunder,

“Fa, fo, fe, fi, fum, I feel  
I’m going to get a juicy meal.  
Neither victim will be missed,  
A silly Prince and a humorist.”

For a moment, as he heard that voice and those sentiments, Charming felt like turning back, but only for a brief moment, then his courage returned.

“Come,” said Rigolo, “be worthy of your family name of Hullabaloo! Be a man! Nothing can possibly harm you until the last chapter, for this is Fairyland, and the story of your life must fill at least 140 pages.”

Thus encouraged Charming strode straight into the cave, followed by Rigolo, who tried to keep up his own courage by telling himself jokes and making himself laugh.

The giant, a fierce looking fellow, sat on the floor of the cave scowling with both heads. It was an anxious moment for all concerned, but Rigolo put an end to the strain by remarking:

“Well, two heads are better than one, even if one is a block-head.” The giant found this funny, and both of his scowls turned to broad grins.



"You are welcome," he said at last, "most welcome! I expect you to remain for dinner." He gnashed the teeth of both mouths as he said this, just to show in what prime condition they were for tidbits.

"As guests, or as entrées?" asked Rigolo.

"As the entire à la carte menu," replied the giant, smacking his lips.

"Were you ever in a dime museum?" asked Charming, with wonderful courage in one so young.

"No," replied the giant's first head sullenly.

"Too bad. You could make a hundred a week easily. That's what they paid Mlle. Christine, the two headed-lady, and she was only half your size."

"Oh, indeed," grunted the giant's second head.

"Then there was Chang, the Chinese Giant; I saw him at a dime museum once."

"He was my cousin," roared the giant with both heads.

"Ah, well, he was only seven feet high, and had only one head, and he got seventy-five a week, and twenty cents a day for dinner. You with your two heads and twelve feet of height ought to get a hundred at least. Then there's the side-show with Barnum's Circus. They pay their freaks very well. The living skeleton keeps living at forty a week, and makes no bones about it," said Charming.

"And the ossified man recently asked for a raise, but he's a hardened wretch," added Rigolo.



"Then there's the man with the elastic skin," said Charming. "His is only a skin game, and yet it pays him well. I should think such a life would suit you better than being a cave-dweller and frightening people out of their senses."

"Think so?" asked the giant, shaking both his heads in doubt. "Well, perhaps you are right. I'll think it over. My two heads will consult about it. In the mean time, I want one more square meal. I dearly like young men fricasseed on toast." Then he sang a duet with both heads.

"Two gentlemen quite self reliant,  
Once called on a giant defiant;—  
An à-la-carte lunch,  
Made an end of the bunch,  
'Oh bring me some more!' said the giant."

"Ah, I see the limerick craze has reached you too," said Rigolo. "How do you like this one?"

"There once was a fellow called Jim,  
Whose purse and whose prospects were slim;  
He had a queer notion,  
To bathe in the ocean,  
And thus he was right in the swim."

"Very good," said the giant's second head. "That reminds me of another."

And so they regaled each other with limericks for over an hour, both heads vieing with Rigolo and Charming, and laughing heartily whenever there was a particularly good verse. Once the two heads began quarreling, as each wanted to tell the same



limerick. At last the stock gave out. The giant looked at his Waterbury watch and frowned. "Come boys" said he, "I'm sorry to trouble you, but it's time for lunch. I'm hungry."

"Here's an appetizer," said Charming, and he brought out the two sticks of dynamite. "Just eat one of these with each mouth and you will relish us doubly."

It is wonderful how easily giants are fooled. That's what makes fairy tales so interesting. Evidently a giant's body grows at the expense of his brain. Hurdygurdy took the two sticks and looked at them.

"What are they? Candy?" he inquired.

"Yes," said Rigolo. "Dynamighty good candy too. It is something called giant powder, because it is so good for giants. It helps digestion by blowing any impurities out of the system."

Suspecting nothing, Hurdygurdy put a stick of the stuff into each mouth and began chewing.

Whiz, bang, crash! The dynamite went off. The explosion was terrific. When the smoke cleared away, the giant's body lay in one corner of the cave, while both heads were hanging on the limbs of a tree outside, blinking at each other in mute surprise.

"Hurrah!" cried Rigolo and Charming. Each shouldered a head, and staggering under the load, bent their steps toward the castle.

Their reception was very cordial. The King, when he saw the giant's heads, lost his own head for joy, and the Princess fell about



Charming's neck, so that he, too, for a time had two heads on his shoulder.

"Heads I win!" exclaimed Charming. "I claim the Princess Dodo as my bride."

The King's joy turned to sudden grief. He had never meant to give up Dodo, and now that the giant was dead and no longer dangerous, he began to think of some way to break his promise. A wicked mind easily finds a way to do evil, as you will soon see.

"Of course, my boy," he said with a smile, "the princess is yours. I'll invite all the court for breakfast to-morrow, and we'll celebrate your engagement in proper style."

So Charming went to bed very happy, and dreamed of giants and dynamite and Dodos until the alarm clock struck nine.

Next day the whole court assembled to witness the betrothal. Everybody congratulated Charming and Rigolo on their victory.

"How could you do it?" they asked.

"It was a gigantic undertaking," said Rigolo, "and a big thing for the undertaker." Whereat they all laughed politely.

Suddenly in the midst of the festivities, King Chico gave a shriek!

"My crown! My crown!" he cried.

The kohinoor diamond that had adorned the front of his new tiara was missing.

"Somebody has stolen it," gasped Chico. "Lock the doors. Search the company. Let no guilty man escape."

Everybody looked at everybody else with surprise and suspicion.



The chief Pinkerton of the kingdom was telephoned for and at once began an investigation.

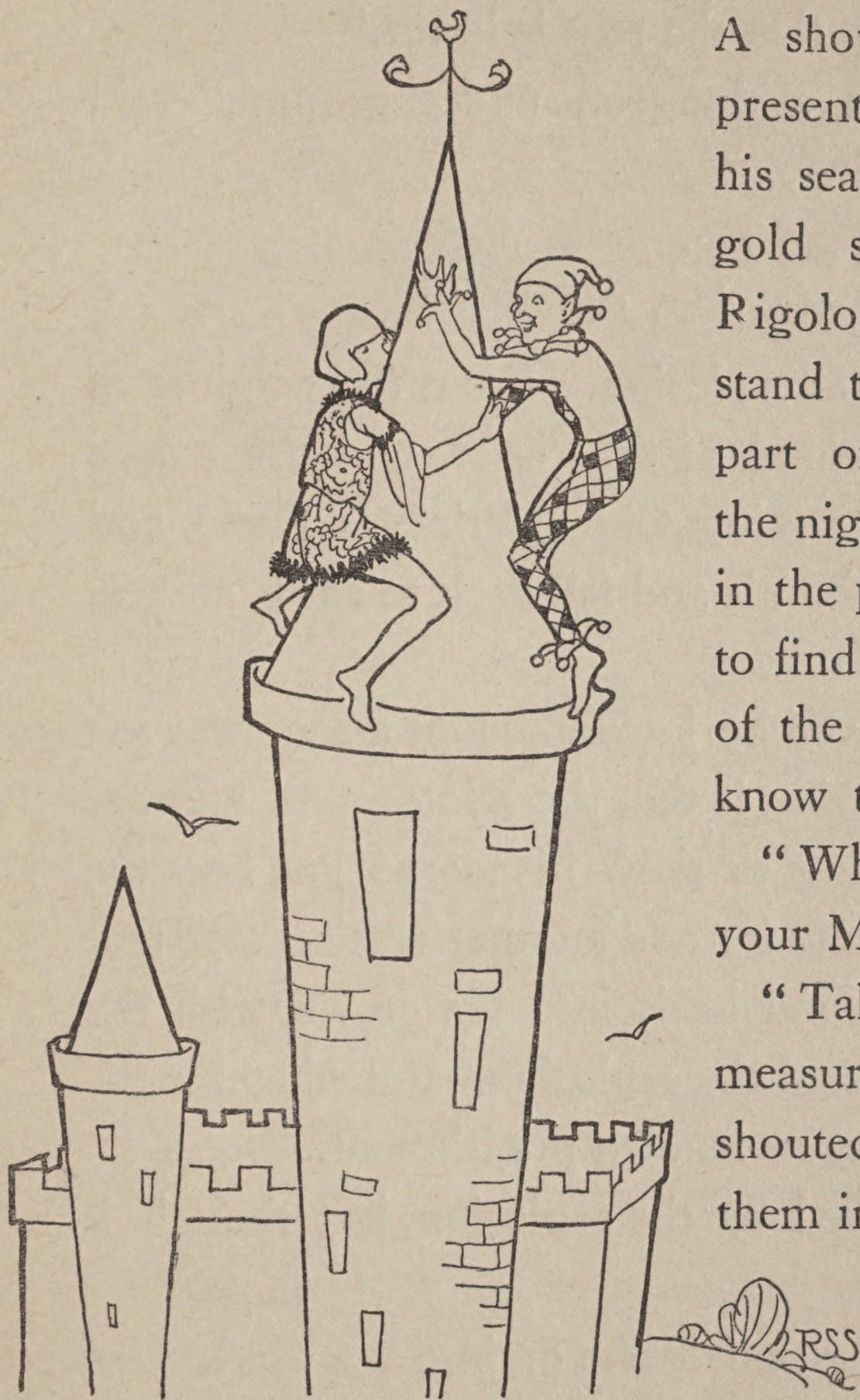
Almost the first person searched was Charming, and what do you think? The missing diamond was found in his coat pocket!

A shout of horror arose from all present. The detective went on with his search and discovered the King's gold snuff box in the pocket of Rigolo. Now of course you understand that this was all a trick on the part of the wicked king. During the night he had hidden these articles in the pockets of his guests in order to find a good cause to get them out of the way, but the company didn't know that.

"What shall I do with them, your Majesty?" asked the detective.

"Take their photographs and measurements for the rogues' gallery," shouted the King. "Then imprison them in the topmost cell of the tower, and there let them rot."

Kings are made to be obeyed—else what's the use of being a king. So our



TWO ON A TOWER



heroes were led off in chains and in tears to the tower, where they took the elevator to the thirty-third floor, were locked in, and left to their fate.

"This isn't so bad," said Rigolo. "It's very much like the skyscrapers we have at home, only that the rent is lower."

"It's better than being in a dungeon under ground," said Charming, and he began singing,

"In a prison cell I sit,  
Thinking Dodo, dear, of you—"

Suddenly there was a terrific explosion. From the window of the tower, they could see a cloud of dust arise, and the palace with all its contents, including King Chico, Princess Dodo, and the royal court, shot up into the air and fell back to earth a mass of ruins and fragments.

Just what happened will never be known. Not a soul was left alive to tell the tale. One version is that the King found another stick of dynamite, and in trying to show his guests just how the giant came to his end, he bit into it; and another version says that he tried to hammer the diamond back into his crown with the stick of dynamite and this caused the explosion. But whatever the cause, the lesson is that evil begets its own punishment.

The tower was badly cracked by the explosion, but though it seemed shaky, it did not fall.

Charming, brave though he was, felt like crying.

"Here, brace up!" cried the jester,

"I'd rather race down," replied Charming through his tears.





THE KING AMID THE RUINS

“This reminds me of a book I once read,” said Rigolo. “It was called ‘Two in a Tower.’”

Presently the jester’s face lit up. It was a sure sign that he had a merry jest on the end of his tongue.



“What’s the joke?” asked Charming.

“Then Rigolo told his joke!!! It was so funny that I will not attempt to tell it to my readers for fear of the effect it might have on them. It set Charming laughing so that he fairly quivered. Even the tower shook with laughter until it cracked its sides, already weakened by the explosion. The result was that the jester’s wonderful humor “brought down the house,” as they say at the theatre, and the tower fell and our friends with it. Luckily they fell rather slowly, about a foot at a time, and Charming reached the ground gently and unhurt. But the jester was not so lucky. He was buried under several tons of stone and mortar, and he had to go a mile or two to borrow a spade to dig himself out.

Prince Charming in the mean time set out again on his travels. He was glad to be rid of the jester, who with all his fun was at times poor company. Making puns grows very tiresome at times; even Shakespeare’s grew wearisome; and laughing when you feel like crying is most annoying. The jester with all his wit was a “Bromide.” It seemed to Charming that he had heard or read most of the jokes before—possibly in some old newspapers or patent medicine almanacs.

All that day he walked on without any further adventures, and towards evening he slept under a haystack, hungry and very weary indeed.





## CHAPTER VII.

**T**HE MORNING of the next day broke bright and early, as mornings usually do in Fairyland, and Charming strolled along looking at the scenery, which was most beautiful. He felt quite happy in spite of his many disappointments. After all it was a pleasant world to live in, and if things did not always go right, there was enough joy to make up for most of the sorrow. As some good old fairy poet once remarked, "There's nothing good or bad but thinking makes it so."

As he emerged from the forest, he saw before him a little figure wearing a red cap, and by her side was running a creature that looked like a good-sized dog. In a few minutes he had caught up with them. He tipped his hat politely and said:

"Excuse me, Miss, but it appears to me that I know you. I must have met you somewhere."

"No doubt," said the lady. "You probably met us in the story books. I'm Little Red Ridinghood, and this is my friend, the Wolf."





LITTLE RED RIDINGHOOD

"That's it, of course," said Charming, and he introduced himself.

Little Red Ridinghood turned her face toward him and smiled.

"Dear me," thought Charming. "How she has aged. I wouldn't have recognized her but for her hood."

Indeed she was no longer the young and beautiful child she had been when her history was written. Several hundred years had passed since then. She was still Little Red Ridinghood, but her face looked her great age. The wolf, too, seemed

old and decrepit, with little of his old time vigor left.

The lady guessed his thoughts and said, "Oh, yes, we are getting older every day. Little Eva of Uncle Tom's Cabin and I are the youngest of the crowd up at the 'Home!' But even we are beginning to show the effects of time. I usually wear a veil when I go out nowadays."



"The Home?" asked Charming. "Where is that?"

"Right behind the hill. Come along with me and you will meet a number of old friends there."



THE "HOME"

Charming accompanied Little Red Ridinghood. He carried her basket for her, which still contained some goodies she was carrying to her sick grandmother. You see the habits one forms



in youth are apt to remain with us even in extreme old age. After a short walk, they reached a rambling old building on which was a sign which read :

“RETREAT FOR ANTIQUATED HEROES OF LEGENDARY NARRATIVE.”

“What does that mean?” asked Charming.

“Oh” replied Little Red Ridinghood, “that’s Fairy Latin, and means, ‘Home for old Fairy-tale people.’ That’s the House that Jack Built, a little remodeled and enlarged, and there live all the people that formerly did great deeds in the Fairy books. They are all very old now, and don’t do so much in the way of heroic acts.”

“I thought most of them were dead,” said Charming.

“Bless you, no! These people will never die. It is true that their place in the world has been taken to some extent by newcomers, but they will live as long as a child remains on earth to read about their wonderful deeds.”

Near the entrance they met a little old shepherdess, attending three very scraggy-looking sheep.

“Who’s that?” asked Charming.

“That’s Little Bo-Peep,” explained Red Ridinghood. “She had a lot of sheep once, but you remember they all got lost. Her story is one of the saddest in Fairyland. Now she has only three sheep; one is ‘Ba Ba Black Sheep’; one is Mary’s Little Lamb, and the third is the sheep in the fable whose clothing the wolf wore. Little Bo-Peep is quite old now and suffers from rheuma-



tism. Dr. Foster, the one that came from Gloucester in a shower of rain, says she'll have to give up tending sheep, or she may be laid up entirely. That's what makes her so sad."

They went into the Home and were soon surrounded by a number of dear old friends.

There were two old ladies who managed the Home. They called themselves "matrons," but all the boarders called them "Mother." They were Old Mother Goose and Old Mother Hubbard. They were dignified, nice-looking

ladies, both wearing loose wrappers which Mrs. Hubbard had invented some years ago. They bade Charming welcome, and took him around to introduce him to the other inmates of the Home. At a table, playing cards, sat Jack and Jill. They were white-haired cronies now, and still very fond of each other. Every day of their lives they went up the same hill to fetch a pail of



LITTLE BO-PEEP



water, although they never fell down now. They knew better than that.

Side by side, on a sofa reading, sat Little Tommy Tucker and Little Miss Muffet. Her name was Mrs. Tommy Tucker now, for she had married Tommy a century before. The poor fellow had cried so often for his supper, that she had taken pity on him and married him, just so that he would get his meals on time. In return for her devotion, he spent his time keeping the spiders

away from her, for you remember how afraid she was of spiders.

They were now very old and wrinkled, but still sang their little songs and loved each other very much. Jack Horner was talking to them and telling them all about

his famous Christmas pie. He was suffering from dyspepsia now, and hadn't eaten any pie for many years. He still liked to have a finger in the pie when anything was going on, but as to eating pie, that was out of the question.

Simple Simon sauntered up and shook hands with Charming. Formerly he was



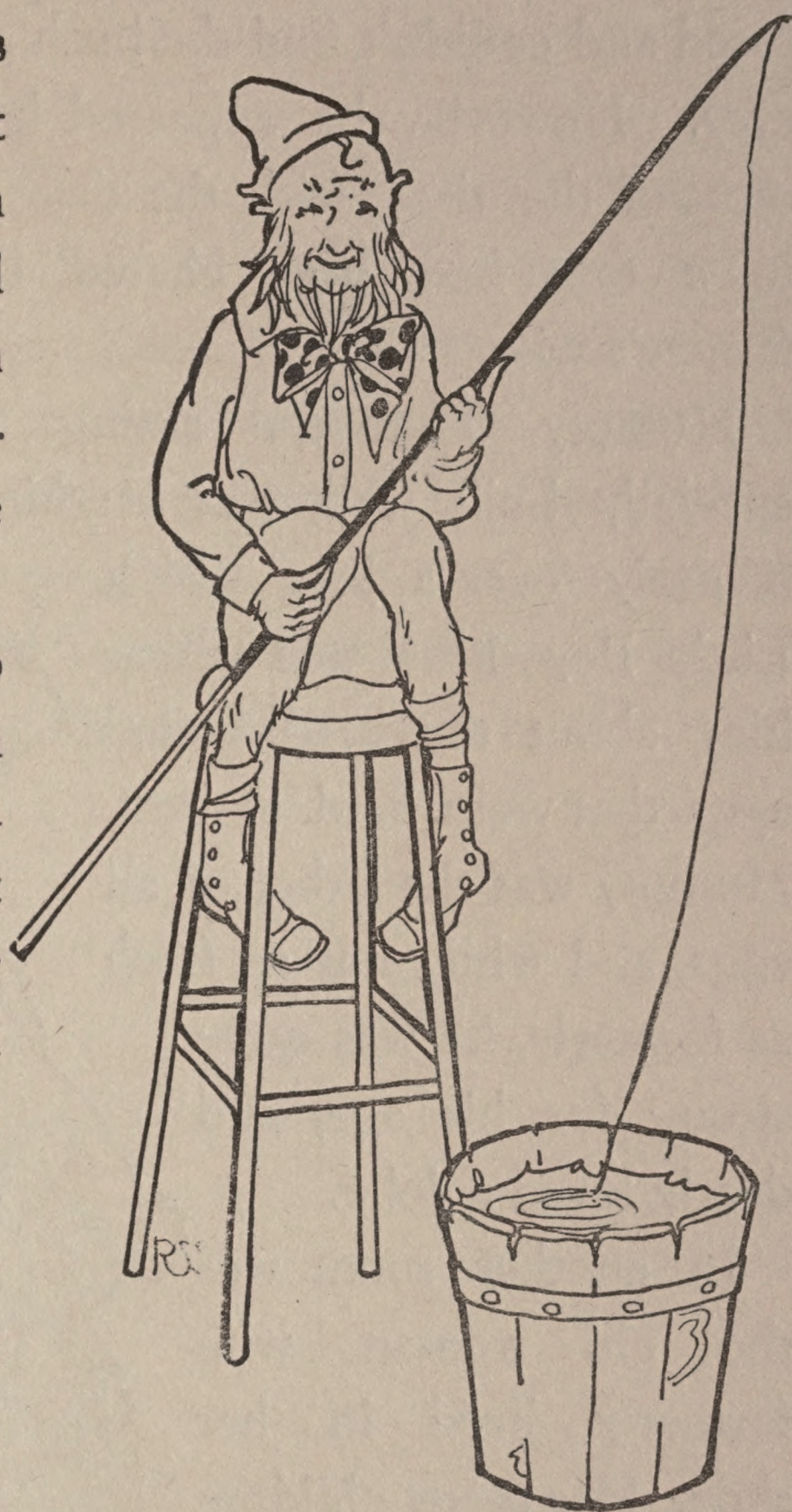
MOTHER HUBBARD AND HER DOG



young and foolish. Now he was old and foolish. One wouldn't exactly call him crazy, but for an old man with long gray hair and all his teeth gone, to try to fish for whales in his mother's wash-tub was eccentric, to say the least.

Tom, the Piper's Son, was also a queer character. He had stolen a pig, you remember, but as a punishment he had to carry that pig around with him until the end of time. How he hated pork! He was introduced to Charming, and after a few pleasant remarks about the weather and the prospects of war, advised the Prince never to associate with pigs.

A poor old blind man was led up and down the ward by a nurse. It was the man who had the reputation of being wondrous wise. He used to jump into bramble bushes and scratch out his eyes and then jump back and scratch them in again. Surely a foolish occupation for a wise man to indulge in. One day when his eyes were out he got con-



SIMPLE SIMON

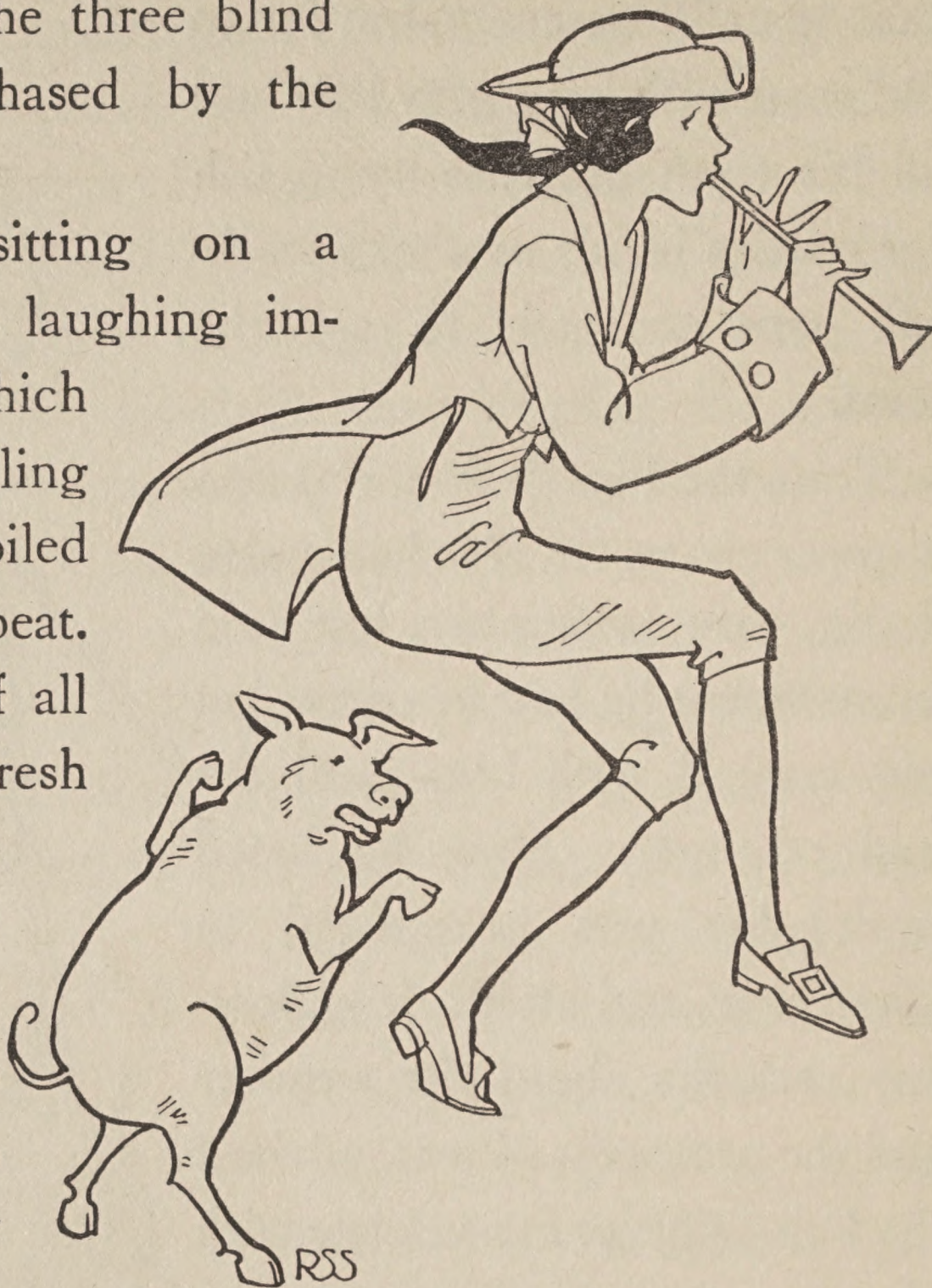


fused and couldn't find the bush again, and so remained blind forever. However, he appeared happy and contented, and played most of the time with the three blind mice that had been chased by the farmer's wife.

Humpty Dumpty, sitting on a specially built wall, was laughing immensely over a joke which Little Boy Blue was telling him about the hard boiled eggs that were hard to beat. Humpty was the father of all eggs, and while not as fresh as formerly, he was quite strong for his age, and dearly loved a joke.

In another room was the old woman who formerly lived in her shoe. Her many children had got married or had moved away, and so she was left all alone. The old shoe having worn out at the sole, and being run down at the heel, she sold out her property to a second-hand shoe dealer and came to the Home to live. She seemed quite happy.

There were a number of other acquaintances here, such as Old Dame Trot, the Ten O'Clock Scholar, the Lady with rings on



TOM THE PIPER'S SON



her fingers and bells on her toes, Mary Contrary, and so forth.

They were all pleased to meet Charming, and made him stay to dinner, which was a jolly affair. Then they gave a performance in the little theatre attached to the Home, and went through the various acts for which they had become famous, and Charming enjoyed it very much. When he left, Old Mother Hubbard kissed him good-bye, and said if he was good and brave, and the story of his adventures sold well, he could come and join them in his old age in the Retreat for Antiquated Heroes of Legendary Narrative.







## CHAPTER VIII.

“**I** REALLY WISH,” said Prince Charming as he wandered along the next day, sad and disheartened—“I really wish Rigolo were here to give me company. Bad as are his puns, and irritating his conversation, he is better than no companion at all.”

He had scarcely spoken before he heard a merry whistle. A moment afterwards the head of Rigolo appeared through the bushes, and was soon followed by the rest of his body.

“Hello Rig,” said the Prince joyfully.

“Hello Charm,” replied the jester.

“I’m glad to see you” said the Prince, “I heard you whistle.”

“Then I didn’t whistle in vain,” said the jester. “Can you tell me who was the first whistler?”

“No.”

“The Wind. Can you tell me the tune he whistled?”

“No.”

“Over the Hills and Far Away. Ha, ha! Good isn’t it? I just made up that joke this minute. I’ll send it in to Puck, maybe they’ll publish it. Oh, it’s great to be so clever.”



"Sunny as ever," said, Charming laughing. "Where are you bound for now?"

"To Euchre Castle, the home of King Clubs of Cardland."

"Where is the castle?" asked the Prince.

"Over there, on the pinocle of yonder hill. The King has promised his daughter, Acehigh, in marriage to any one who will kill the Crocogator, a terrible beast that is destroying his crops. I'm going to try my wit at it."

"How absurd," cried Charming, "for you to suppose you can kill a beast like that or win a princess. Although coming to think of it, your jokes are often deadly enough."

"I killed a Bontagoo once," replied the jester.

"A Bontagoo. What's that?"

"Why a Bontagoo is an animal composed of equal parts of Welsh rabbit and lobster à la Bluebeard, taken just before going to bed. It's a terrible beast."



RIGOLO REAPPEARS



“Well, come along” said the Prince. “If we succeed, I’ll take the Princess and you can have the Crocogator, or else you can take the Crocogator and I’ll have the Princess.”

Rigolo was satisfied either way, and they walked along in the best of humor, telling each other their wonderful adventures since last they met.

By noon they reached the castle of King Clubs. The house was built entirely of playing cards, with the spots forming the windows and doors. There was a bridge leading to the main entrance, and a Big Casino and a Little Casino at either side of the gate. There was a poker on deck near the door and with this they knocked for admittance. Instantly the door opened and the Knave of Spades appeared with a tray and took their cards.

“Shuffle right in and sit down,” he said. “The Queen is putting on her diamonds and the King is playing solitaire in the Anteroom. Whist! Don’t disturb him, or he’ll raise the deuce.”

The visitors sat down on the polished floor and waited patiently. At last the King finished his game with himself. “I’ve won,” he said, “but I had to cheat to do it. It is very distressing how cards run sometimes. Yet I believe in a square deal. Well, gentlemen, what can I do for you?”

Charming introduced himself.

“Prince Charming, indeed? De-lighted.” said the King. “Take a chair.”

“I’m the only son of King Hullabaloo,” added Charming modestly.



“Ah! Take two chairs. How’s your royal father? Well, I hope. And your Queenly mother? Beautiful as ever? Do you know, young man, that I came near marrying your mother? I intended rescuing her from the dragon, but the alarm clock didn’t go off, and I overslept myself. Your father got there ahead of me. Alas! Alas! Time plays us some scurvy tricks. Well, my boy, what can I do for you?”

“I’ve come to kill the Crocogator and marry the Princess, your daughter,” said Charming.

The King became serious at once.

“Young man,” he said, “you are undertaking a big job. To kill the Crocogator is a great risk, to marry the Princess is a still greater risk. To try to do both is—well the language of Card-land has no word strong enough to express it.”

Prince Charming put one hand behind his back, and the other in the bosom of his coat (as he had seen on the pictures of the great Napoleon), and said:

“Sire, nothing is too difficult for the son of King Hullabaloo.”

“Well,” said the King, “I’m satisfied if you are. But first take a look at those monuments out there,” and he pointed to the window. “Are they not imposing?”

“If it were not so grave a subject,” said Rigolo, “I would crack a joke about the monumental folly of having them there.”

“It looks like a private cemetery,” said Charming, shuddering.

“It is. Each stone is in honor of a brave knight who lost his life trying to do what you want to do.”



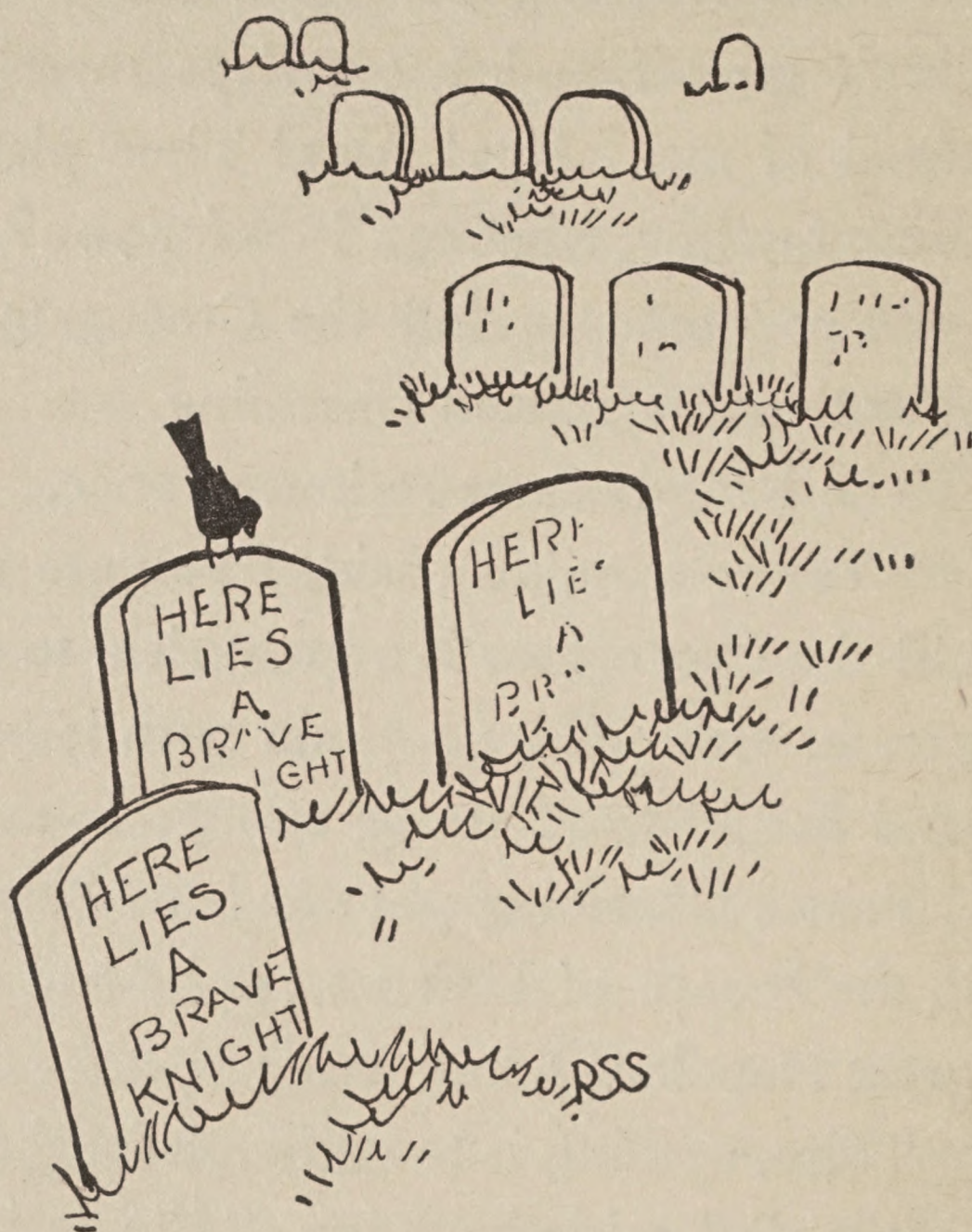
"Are they all buried there?" asked Charming sadly.

"Bless your heart, no. They are buried in the midst of the Crocogator, but we always erect a monument, even when there is nothing left of them but a memory. We miss them when they are gone." The King wiped away a tear that was trickling down his beard.

Charming was on the point of declaring that he would like to think it over, when Princess Acehigh entered. When she saw Charming, a flush, a real royal flush, spread over her beautiful features, and Charming, too, blushed as red as the ten of hearts.

He felt that with her, life would be worth living, even if you had to die to get her. She was indeed lovely, and worth facing a dozen Crocogators for, if there had been that many in the world, which fortunately there were not. Charming felt all his courage come back to him in her presence.

"If the worst happens," he thought, "my monument will be



THE CEMETERY



there for her to look at. Perhaps she will think of me sometimes and drop a tear for me."

"Don't be afraid," whispered the jester. "I know of a sure way to kill the beast, and the princess is yours."

Thus encouraged, Charming bowed low before Acehigh and said, "Beautiful Princess, to-morrow I go forth to conquer or to die for you."

And the jester with his usual wit began to sing:

"He who fights and runs away,  
May win the princess some fine day;  
But he who fights the Crocogator,  
May crock himself a little later."

The King and the princess both laughed, and said, "How bright" and "How cute," and asked him if he ever took anything for it. The jester explained that he was born that way and couldn't help being so funny. Then the Queen came in, covered with diamonds, and a dress that must have cost at least three thousand gold coins, and wasn't paid for yet, although the dress-maker had called five times for the money. They all sat down to a very fine course dinner, and for the time the Crocogator was entirely forgotten.

Next morning, however, the King reminded them that they must set out at once if they wanted to earn their pay. During the night the Crocogator had eaten up all the corn on a ten-acre field, including a new harvesting machine with the driver and two horses, and something had to be done at once. So Charming and Rigolo decided to go without delay, and buckled on the armor.



the king had provided for them, and each took a spear and a sword for good luck. The Princess wept bitterly, for she hated to see the poor young prince become the monster's prey. She didn't care what happened to the jester.

"Fear nought," said Charming. "I go to battle for thy sake as did the knights of old." Whereupon Rigolo sang:

"In days of old, when knights were cold,  
And zero held full sway,  
A Princess sat in her bleak flat,  
And shivered all the day."

There were twenty-seven verses each funnier than the preceding one. The Princess dried her soulful eyes and tried to smile, but strange to say the song only made her sadder. The King and his four knaves rode with the Prince as far as the edge of the forest, and as they heard the roars of the monster, they rode back as fast as they could, leaving the two heroes to face the danger alone.

"Now listen to me," said Rigolo, when the others had gone. "This is a simple job. Crocogators often cry like children, hence the saying 'Crocogator's tears' when anybody cries and doesn't mean it. When foolish people, thinking that a child is weeping, go to see what's the trouble, he gobbles them up. The Allodile does the same thing, only more so. Now I'm going to change this animal's tears to laughter by telling him some of my sunniest jokes. When he has his mouth wide open and shows the white spot at the back of his palate, take your spear and hurl it right through his skull, and then the victory is yours. That's easy enough I'm sure."



"Oh, very easy," replied Charming, but he turned a little pale nevertheless. On came the monster, over seventy-nine feet long, with open jaws and glistening teeth, and crying like a baby with the colic and no paregoric in sight. Had Charming not remembered the charms of the beautiful Princess Acehigh he would have turned and fled.

"How-de-do Croco?" said Rigolo pleasantly as the beast came on. "What a mouth you've got! What a fine opening for a young man!"

"Ha, ha," laughed Charming in spite of his fear, and the beast, too, seemed to smile just the least bit at this brave display of wit.

"The greatest jaw I ever saw. It beats that of my mother-in-law," sang Rigolo, thus for the first time in history making a joke about the mother-in-law.

Entirely forgetting his danger, Charming was convulsed with laughter. The beast, too, stopped its crying and began to brighten up considerably.

"What is the difference between a tree and a Crocogator?" continued Rigolo. "One leaves in the Spring, and the other leaves when the menagerie does."

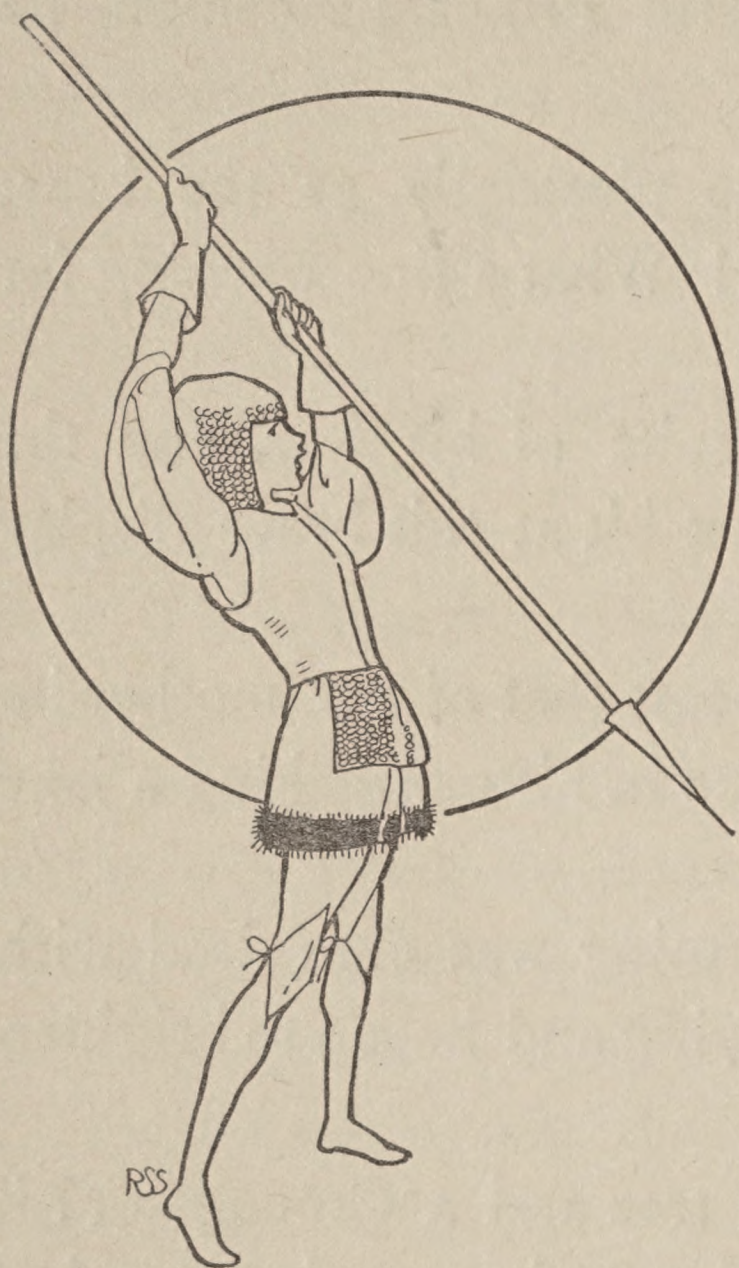
This was too much for the beast. It gave vent to a loud roar of laughter, and opened its jaws so wide that it nearly swallowed its head to the ears.

This was Charming's opportunity. With what a newspaper reporter would have called a superhuman effort for one so young, he hurled his spear right into the beast's cavernous mouth. It



came out on the other side and kept right on until it buried itself in a tree two miles beyond.

With a final laugh that was more like a groan, the huge monster turned over on its back, kicked a few times, and was as dead as a railroad spike. Charming and Rigolo fell around each other's necks for joy.



"Oh, you're so funny," said Charming. "You're just killing."

"Oh, that was dead easy," replied Rigolo. "I once made a laughing Hyena laugh itself to death, but that took all the jokes I could possibly think of."

Suddenly there was a strange sound within the dead beast, like the knocking of a dozen fists against a wooden door.

"Let me out, let me out!" cried a score of voices.

"Where are you?" asked Charming, looking about in surprise.

"Here in this beastly beast's insides. Hurry and let us out."

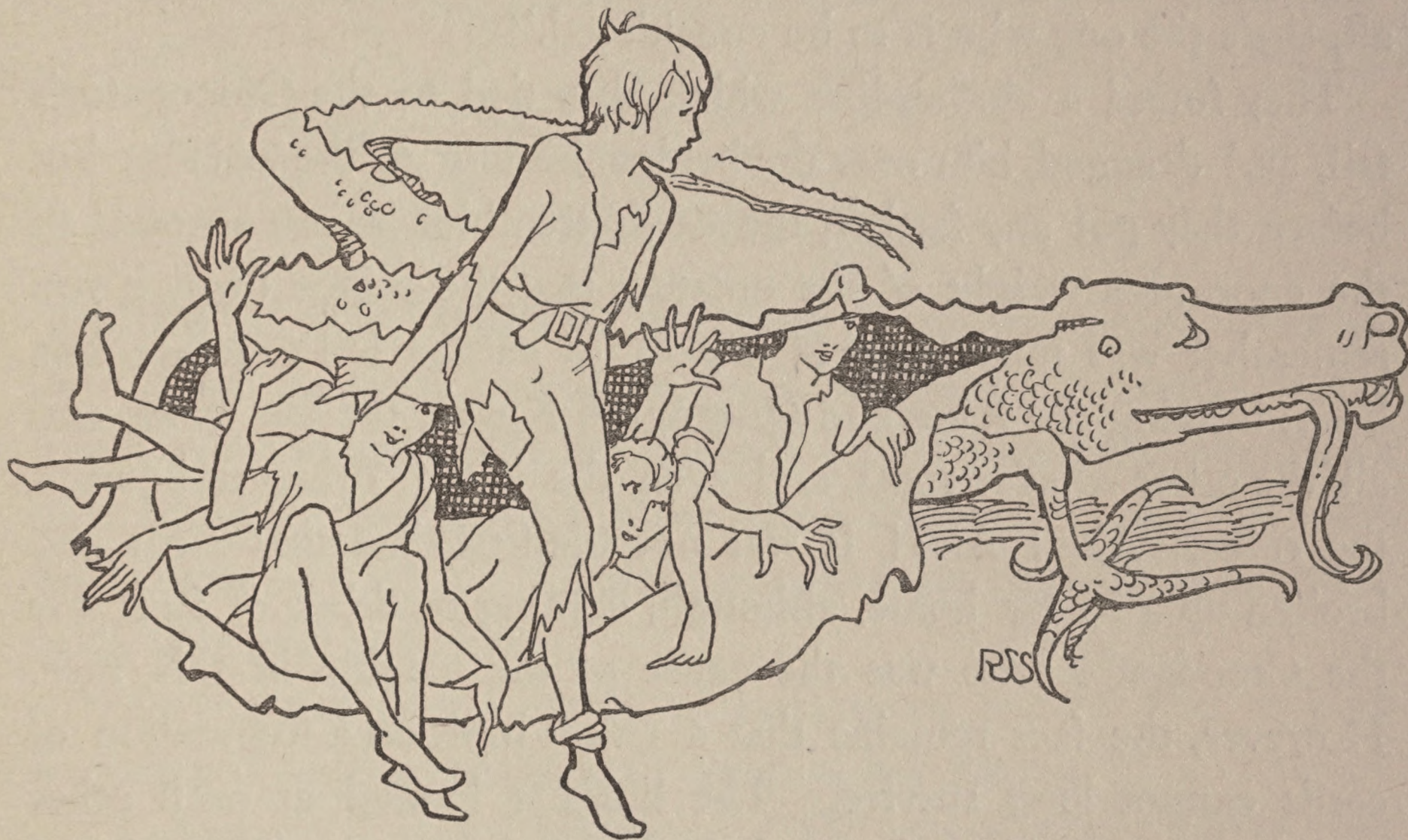
Charming pulled his sword from its scabbard and ripped open the Crocogator's hide as though he were operating for appendicitis. Out came twenty knights, one driver, and two horses, a little mouldy 'tis true, and blinking in the sun, but otherwise as good as new.



"Who are you?" asked Charming, a little surprised.

"We are the fellows that went to fight the beast and were swallowed alive," explained one of them.

"How did you manage to live?" asked Rigolo. "It must have been rather uncomfortable in there."



OPENING THE CROCOGATOR

"Oh, no," replied another. "It is a little close, and the ventilation not quite up to the modern ideas, but for one who is used to tenement house accommodations it wasn't so bad."

"Well I'm glad I saved you," said Charming.

"And now, forward," shouted one who seemed to be the leader.

"You drag his carcass to the King while I claim the Princess."

"I beg your pardon, gentlemen," said Charming, "but the Princess is mine, for 'tis I who slew the beast."



“Oh yes, no doubt!” replied the others in chorus. “But we tried first, and if we hadn’t been gobbled up, we would have succeeded. First come, first served.”

The Prince found no answer for such logic.

“Well,” he said at last, “we’ll let the Princess decide, for after all, she’s the one who is to be considered.”

They found a clothes-line which they tied to the Crocogator’s tail, and dragged him over the bridge leading to the palace; but before they got any farther, the earth trembled so on account of the enormous weight of the creature that the palace (which you remember was made only of a pack of cards) fell together in a heap, burying the King and Queen, the Knave, the ten spots, and all the other smaller spots, and even the lovely Princess beneath the ruins. Alas! Alas! It was not the first time that cards had broken up a happy home, although, coming to think of it, it was the Crocogator who was the cause of the trouble in this case. However, the fact remains that a house built on a foundation of cards cannot long survive. The knights looked at each other with tears streaming down their faces, then giving the wicked Crocogator a parting kick, they went their several ways.

When Charming looked for the jester, he was nowhere to be found, so he sorrowfully continued his journey alone.





## CHAPTER IX.

PRINCE CHARMING wandered along, wondering what his next escapade would be, and the more he wandered, the more he wondered, until he suddenly found himself on the banks of a beautiful lake, across whose glassy surface he could see the high tower of a castle. Charming looked up page 77 of his road-book and read as follows :

“To the left is the castle of Lohengrin, where Elsa is kept imprisoned until a knight shall come to her rescue.”

“Lohengrin,” said Charming. “Of course, that’s where Elsa is. Where else could Elsa be? According to the story there ought to be a swan near by to bear me across the lake.”

You see Charming had heard of Wagner’s opera even in those days when the music of the future was not yet a thing of the past. He had scarcely spoken when a beautiful white swan swam to where he stood.

“Can you take me across to yon castle?” asked the Prince politely, for he knew that the swan was really a Flemish King’s son who had been tarred and feathered by a wicked magician.



"Nothing easier," replied the bird in a haughty, Wagnerian manner. "Jump on my back and I'll take you over in a jiffy. You are the seventh knight that's tried to save our lady this week."

"What became of the others?" asked Charming.

"Oh they were—" but the swan spoke so indistinctly on account of its long neck, that Charming couldn't catch the words.

"Well you can't frighten me," he replied as he got on the swan's back. "I'm the son of King Hullabaloo, and the godson of Fairy Papillion, and I'm going to sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, to save Elsa."

"Hold fast," cried the swan suddenly, "I see a frog," and he dived head foremost into the lake, leaving Charming to struggle in the chilly water.

"Sink or swim, survive or perish," ran through his head, but, alas, he had never learned to swim. He floundered around for a while uncertain what to do. Fortunately the water seemed rather thick—almost like mayonnaise sauce—and he had no



THE CASTLE OF LOHENGRIN



trouble to keep afloat. The swan came up a moment later with a squirming little frog in its mouth.

"This just fills the bill," he said as he gulped it down.

"Yes, but how about me?" asked Charming angrily.

"Oh, you? Princes don't eat frogs, only frogs' legs, fricasseed," and the swan began to sing:

"A frog he would a-wooing go,  
Whether his mama would let him or no;  
There came along a hungry swan,  
Who gobbled him up and swallowed him down."

"How do you like my voice?" asked the swan.

"Not at all," replied the Prince. "It needs cultivating."

"I have a frog in my throat," said the swan, "that's why."

Further conversation was interrupted by the appearance of Mama Frog, a creature fully as big as the swan, who croaked, "Where's my pollywog— my own little pollywog?"

Then seeing Charming paddling about in the water, she said, "Ah, there's the wretch who has eaten my darling," and without giving Charming a chance to say a word in self defense, she lifted him out of the water with her mouth, carried him to the shore and gave a kick which lifted him high in the air, and sent him flying through space as though Fairy Papillion had again given him magic wings.

He flew and flew until he almost felt lonely so high up in the air; then he took a downward course and landed right in the garden of King Heinrich of Brabant. He picked himself up, and being wet and miserable ran towards the palace. Suddenly he



dashed full force against the King, who unexpectedly appeared around the corner.

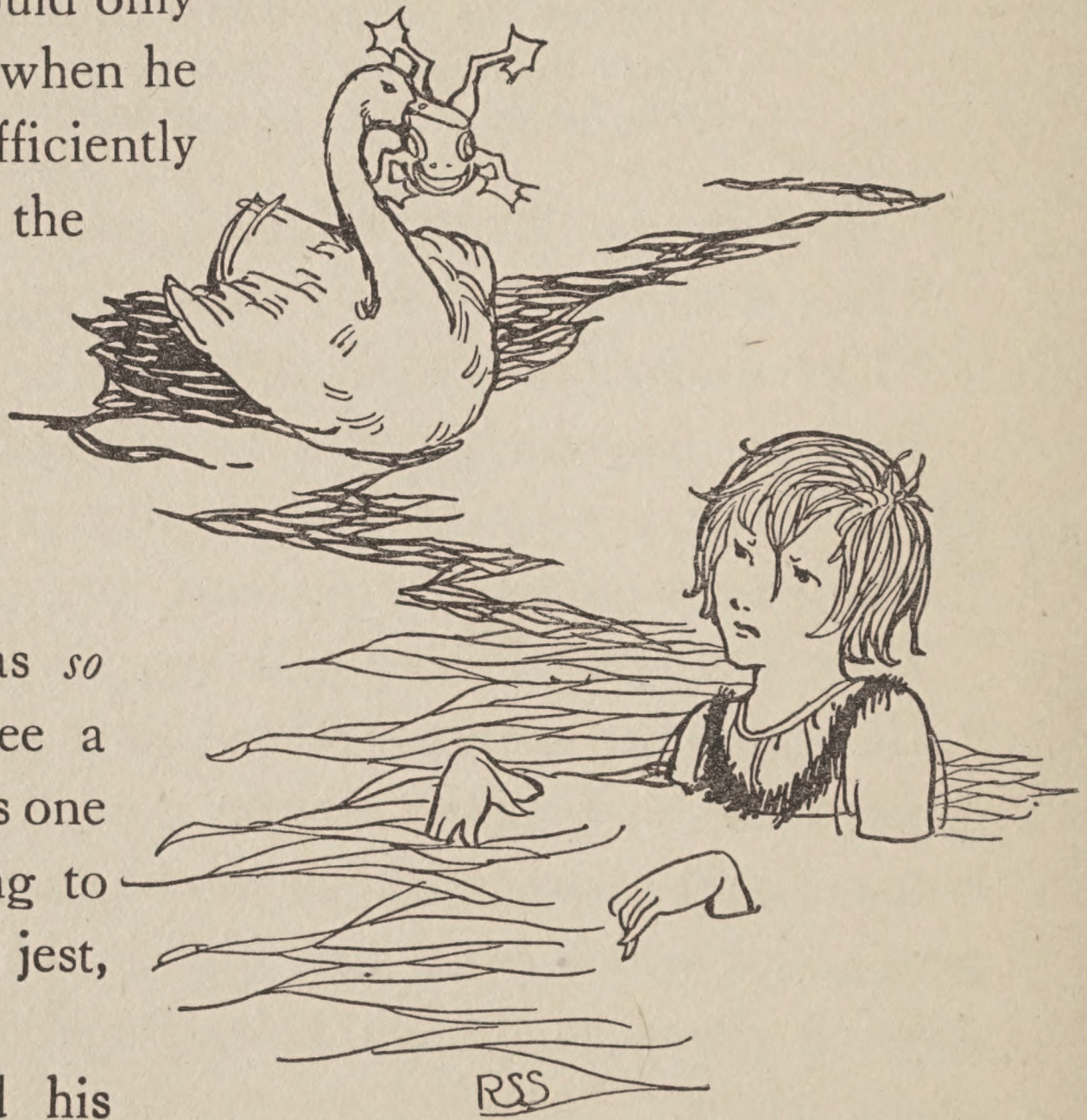
The good king was enjoying his daily airing, and who should be with him but Rigolo the Jester, who had walked around the other way and was amusing the King with a few new jokes.

For a moment after his unexpected collision with Charming, the King could not find words for utterance, as they say in the story books. For a time he could only make wild gestures, but when he recovered his breath sufficiently Charming heard more of the dialect used in that part of the country than he had ever heard before.

Rigolo looked on and laughed. He was *so* humorous and could see a jest in anything. He was one big jest; and yet, coming to think of it, if a man is a jest, can he be any jester?

"What's this?" said his majesty at last, holding Charming at arm's length by the hair.

"Why Maj," whispered Rigolo, winking, "can't you see it's a lobster, a new kind that some fairy has sent to deck your table?"



THE SWAN CATCHES A FROG



"True," said the King, who was very near-sighted. "It must be a lobster. Let's have him for dinner, for there's nothing better than a lobster unless it be two lobsters."

Whereat Rigolo sang:

"I love a little lobster, his sauce is so warm,  
And if I don't eat him, he'll do me no harm."

"Your Majesty," cried Charming in terror, "I'm no lobster, but only a Prince. I'm the only son of King Hullabaloo."

"Really now, that's too bad," replied the King, "and I had my mouth all ready for lobster. So you're a Prince, eh? But how did you manage to come upon me so suddenly?"

Charming told about the swan and the frog.

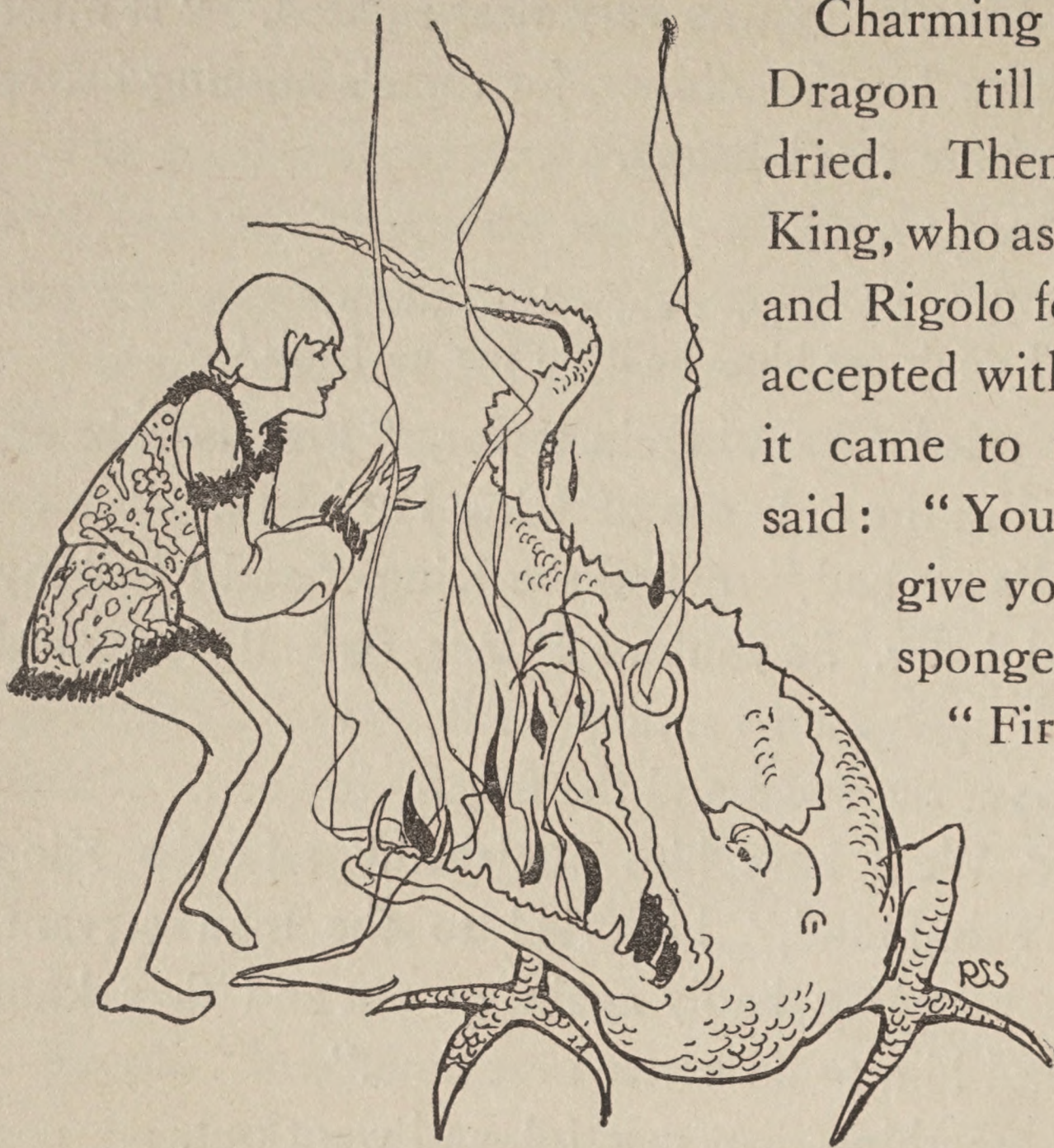
"The swan, eh? We'll have him punished," said the King angrily. "Here, Telramund," he cried to the man servant. "The swan's been behaving badly again, go out and tie a knot in his neck to remind him to do better next time."

Telramund said something disrespectful, and went out.

"But my boy, you're wet and shivering. We must dry you or you'll catch cold. Here, Ortrud," he cried to the chambermaid, "take the Prince to the Dragon Fafner and let him dry his clothes."

Fafner, the Dragon, was chained in the garage. He was a very useful beast. Whenever you played a certain "leit-motif" on the pianola, he breathed fire and flames from his mouth. They used him to warm the palace, heat the cook stove, and supply the power for the elevator. He had a fiery disposition, and they kept him chained and padlocked, with a barbed wire fence around him.





THE PRINCE WARMS HIMSELF BEFORE FAFNER

Charming stood before the Dragon till his clothes were dried. Then he returned to the King, who asked both Charming and Rigolo for dinner, and they accepted with pleasure. When it came to the desert, Rigolo said: "Your Majesty, I can give you a fine recipe for sponge cake."

"Fire ahead," said his Majesty; "you bake the cake and I'll take the cake."

"Take the whites of three eggs," said Rigolo, "and beat them till they're

black and blue. Take a quart of milk from your neighbor when he's not looking, and beat that too. Let it stand till it gets tired of standing, then let it sit down. Get a sponge at the drug store and—"

But the King was laughing so that he almost choked, and Rigolo was forced to stop, although the joke was only half done.

Charming wondered where Elsa was all this time. He was eager to see her and fall in love with her. He knew her sad story by heart, how she had been married to Lohengrin, how her



wicked relatives made her ask a question she had promised not to ask, how Lohengrin left her and went away. No doubt she was kept in confinement in some far-off room of the castle.

Suddenly Telramund came and whispered something into the King's ear.

"What!" shouted the King. "Elsa escaped! It cannot be! How do you know?"

"Your Majesty," said Telramund, trembling, "that tenor Knight who sang the role of Siegfried the week before last, was seen prowling around the grounds last night. She must have run off with him."

Whoever hasn't seen a king in a rage, has no idea how angry a king can get. Heinrich of Brabant, especially, had an awful temper. When he got angry he usually sang in a deep bass voice, and now he sang so deep and loud that he broke the windows in the palace, and split the soles of his shoes. He raved and tore his hair, and as that was painful, he tore at Rigolo's hair, which hurt him less and gave him more satis-



THE KING IN A RAGE





TWO SAD FRIENDS

faction. In the midst of the excitement, Fafner, the Dragon, got loose, and one could hear his chains clanking in the courtyard.

"Come," whispered Charming to Rigolo, "I don't think it's safe here. Let's try our luck elsewhere."

So the two friends went sadly down the road hand in hand. "Business is very bad," said Prince Charming in a weary voice. "Since starting out I have had nothing but bad luck."

"Indeed," said Rigolo, "Tell me about it."

"Well I've been arrested for speeding, captured by a witch, was twice imprisoned, was tortured by King Cole, chased by a Dinosaur, was disappointed by several princesses, and worst luck of all, I have met you."

"Oh, yes, I can sympathize with you," said the Jester. "This Fairy Tale business is not what it is cracked up to be."

"And yet," said Charming, "if I only had a lamp like my cousin Aladdin had, I am sure I could make a hit with it."

"Oh, what's the use of a lamp?" asked Rigolo. "The tungsten light is far more practical and just as cheap."





# The ADVENTURES with THE LAMP

## CHAPTER X

RIGOLO had scarcely spoken before Charming's eye rested on a stone in the ground with an iron ring in it.

"See!" he cried. "Another adventure! Let's lift up the stone and see what's under it."

Together they tugged at the ring. The stone, held down by the moist earth, stuck fast, but as they pulled, it suddenly lifted and both of them fell over and rolled down the hill.

"Aha!" cried Rigolo, "now I know the meaning of 'Felling two boys with one stone.'" They came back, however, and Charming quickly jumped into the hole.

"Hurrah!" he cried a moment later. "I have it, Aladdin's lamp! It's the real one, for it has his name engraved on it."

"Let's rub it," said Rigolo, "and see what happens."

Charming gave the lamp a gentle rub. Instantly there was a flash of light, a roar of sound, and a puff of smoke like a giant fire cracker shooting off on the Glorious Fourth, and there before them stood a genie, the spirit of the lamp.

I know my readers would be glad to know what the genie



looked like, for in these days a genie is as rare as the Dodo. He was about sixteen feet high, and his shoulders and chest were broad and athletic. His head was peculiar to say the least, for it



TOGETHER THEY TUGGED AT THE RING

was twice as big as it should have been, and broader than high. His red hair hung down his back in long snake-like curls. He had only one eye, right in the middle of his forehead, and had a green beard that hung down to his waist and had never been brushed or combed. Instead of feet, his legs just ended in mist. When he spoke, it sounded like the rumbling of an elevated train.

Of course both Charming and Rigolo trembled a little at the sight of the fellow, but felt better when the genie asked, "What wouldst thou of me? I am the genie of the lamp and obey whomsoever rubs her."

"That's good," said Rigolo. "Bring us a nice supper."

The genie looked at him savagely but didn't move.

"Did you hear me?" asked Rigolo.

"Did you rub her?" asked the genie.

"Did I rubber? That's slang. I don't usually rubber," said the Jester.



"I obey only those that rub her, namely the lamp."

"Oh, I see," said Prince Charming. "In that case I shall give the order. Bring us the best meal you can prepare in half a minute, and remember we are advocates of pure food."

"All my preparations are guaranteed by the government under the pure food law," said the genie with a roar. Then he disappeared, but reappeared in an instant with two attendants who bore a set table between them, and what a spread it contained! From caviare to coffee, nothing was missing.

"That genie is a genius," said Rigolo with his mouth full, while Charming said nothing, but ate as though he feared it might be his last meal for a week. The two attendants waited on them with lightning speed, and the genie himself removed the dishes and polished up the glasses as though he were receiving sixty dollars a month wages, whereas he wasn't sure of getting even a tip.

At last the dinner was over, and the dishes were empty and the diners were full. The genie clapped his hand, and instantly the table, service, and all disappeared as if in the air.

"What else does your highness command?" asked the genie.



THE GENIE APPEARS



"Ask him for wealth," whispered the Jester.

"A splendid suggestion. Give me enough wealth to make me the richest man in the world," said Charming modestly.

"Nothing easier," replied the genie. "Johndee, the Oil King, and Andycee, the Steel King, shall be paupers in comparison."

He clapped his hands, and in a twinkling a hole in the ground opened, about the size of a cellar door, and a staircase let them down into the earth.

"Come," said the genie, "but be careful you don't slip on the bottom step."

Down a passage they went, brilliantly lit up by fire flies, until they reached a large vaulted room, which was so bright that they had to put on spectacles which were conveniently hanging near the door for that purpose. The light came from millions of diamonds that were heaped up on the floor.

"Dear me," said Charming, "I never thought there were so many diamonds in the world."

"There aren't," said the genie. "Sh—I'll tell you a secret. This is where the De Beers Diamond Co. keeps its surplus gems."

"Surplus? What does that mean?" asked Charming.

"You see only a few of the diamonds which they find are allowed to be sold. If they sold them all, solitaires would be as cheap as rhinestones. The only difference between a rhinestone and a diamond is its price. So they put all they don't need down here."

"It's a great scheme," said the Jester. "Diamonds are trumps."





CHARMING AND RIGOLO ARE PROVIDED WITH A SPREAD BY THE GENIE







"Take all you want," said the genie, and getting two big sacks, he helped fill them to the top with the brilliants.

"They are very heavy," said Charming with a sigh.

"Of course," replied the genie. "Each sack contains twenty thousand carats."

"Carrots?" said the Jester dropping his sack. "That's a vegetable I detest. Give me succotash or beans, but no carrots."

The misunderstanding was explained by the genial genie and Charming and Rigolo, each with a sack on his shoulders, climbed up the stairs, while the genie disappeared in a very mysterious manner. The two adventurers trudged along the forest road, happy though tired.

"I never knew diamonds were so heavy," said Charming.

"No, they usually seem light," remarked the Jester, stopping to wipe his perspiring brow.

"Let's set them down for a minute and rest," suggested the Prince.

"Of course, diamonds were made to set," replied Rigolo. So they sat down and rested. After a pause Rigolo said, "What a pity you didn't ask for a horse or an automobile or something to carry our wealth for us."



DESCENDING INTO THE CAVE



"Do you know," said the Prince laughing, "I really wish you were a camel and were carrying both sacks."

Now he really didn't mean it, but just at the moment, his elbow happened to rub the lamp that hung by his side, and in an instant Rigolo was turned into a camel, all covered with hair, his long ears wagging from side to side, and on his hump were two heavy sacks.

Prince Charming held his sides with laughter. "Really, Rigolo," he said, "you've often been funny, but never quite so funny as now. I wish you could see yourself. Ha, ha, ha! Here, gidap. Carry these sacks home for me," and taking a bough of

a tree for a switch he gave the poor beast a blow across the back.

The camel, staggering under his load, went on. Big tears rolled down from his eyes as he thought of his changed condition, and he made up his mind to get even with Charming for this scurvy trick.

After walking awhile, the Prince felt rather weary.

"Well" he thought, "that beast is strong



CHARMING FINDS THE SACKS HEAVY



enough to carry me too." So he jumped on the poor camel's back, right on top of the sacks of diamonds. Now that was adding insult to injury, and the camel closed his legs under him like a jackknife, and lay down in the middle of the road with a suddenness that made Charming roll off into the dirt.

"Ha, ha," laughed the camel. "It served you right."

"Gidap!" cried the Prince, belaboring his friend with a stick.

"No, indeed," replied the beast, "I may be a camel, but I'm no ass."

"Come, don't be stubborn," said the Prince, and he tried to pull the head up by the ears. In his zeal, he got too near, and as he touched the camel's head, the beast put forward his nose and with it rubbed the lamp, saying, "I want to be a man again." Instantly he regained his former shape, while the Prince held his sides with laughter.

"This is no laughing matter," cried the Jester, making a fist. "I'll have you know that no one, not even a Prince, can take such liberties with me."

It would have gone hard with the Prince had not a strange thing happened—an incident which is worthy of a separate chapter.



THE PRINCE LAUGHS





# *The* ADVENTURES *with* THE BOTTLE

RS

## CHAPTER XI

A VOICE, very weak indeed, was heard crying, "Let me out, let me out."

"What's that?" asked the Prince.

"It sounds like a voice," replied the Jester.

"But whose?" said the Prince.

"I don't know," replied the Jester.

"Let's look," said the Prince.

And forgetting their quarrel, as well as their diamonds, they searched the bushes for the owner of the voice.

They found nothing but an old copper bottle with a funny screw top, and from within a voice kept crying, "Let me out."

"That must be one of those Thermos bottles I've heard of," said the Prince. "If anything once gets inside, it will keep it hot or cold forever."

"Suppose we open it and see what's in it," said Rigolo, beginning to unscrew the stopper.

A thick black smoke came out, like when the cook lights the



furnace the first time in November and forgets to open the damper. It arose and gradually took the form of a great giant.

"Hullo," said the Prince rather startled. "It looks like another genie. I can't say he is handsome, although he has three eyes instead of one."

Truly the fellow was fearful to look upon, and both our friends trembled with terror.

"Who are you?" at length asked Charming timidly.

"I'm the genie of King Solomon," roared the newcomer angrily. "He locked me up in this bottle four thousand, three hundred and thirty-seven years ago."

"That shows he deserved his reputation as a wise man," replied the Jester.

"Silence!" roared the genie. "For four thousand, three hundred and thirty-seven years I have hoped some one would release me, and to him would I have given the wealth of the Indies, but no one came. No one came."

"Well, here we are at last," said Rigolo with a merry wink. "Where's the wealth?"

"You have come seven years too late," said the genie. "After the time had expired, I swore that any one who saved me should surely die," shouted the genie. "Death is your portion. Prepare to die! Prepare to die!"

"Of course," said the Jester. "I'll go home and take out an accident policy and will come right back."

"Wait," said Charming, "I'll go with you. I want to write my will and pay my debts."



"Hold!" shrieked the genie. "You do not stir from this spot. Your hour has struck! Your hour has struck!"

Sure enough, they heard a bell from somewhere striking the hour. The genie rolled his three eyes in as many directions at once and his teeth gnashed as though he longed to bite our heroes into bits and Fletcherize them.

What was there to be done?

What indeed?

Prince Charming had a simple but bright idea. He rubbed his lamp. In a twinkling the genie of the lamp appeared.

"Did you rub her?" he asked.

"I did," said the Prince. "Get rid of that impertinent imp. He's too—" The Prince was going to say fresh, but that was hardly the right adjective, seeing how smoky he smelled.

The two genies looked at each other savagely for a second and then fell on each other like two prize fighters who are trying for the championship belt and three-fourths of the gate receipts.

Thank your stars, dear readers, that you were not there to witness that combat. It was the most terrible set-to imaginable. The combatants glared at each other, smote each other, made faces at each other, belched forth fire at each other, till the very air was blue and green. They couldn't kick each other, for neither had any feet, but their hands fairly churned the air.

The Marquis of Queensbury rules were entirely forgotten. They fought fair and foul. Once one was on top and then the other, while Prince Charming and Rigolo yelled at the top of their voices and spurred their champion on.



Had Solomon's genie not been confined within the bottle so long, he would no doubt have won the battle and carried off the prize, for he was by far the bigger of the two, but his long confinement in so narrow a space had cramped his limbs so that the other had the advantage.

They fought for over an hour, until at last the smoky fellow cried "Dayenu," which is Sanskrit for "sufficient," and the battle was at an end. The spirit of the lamp clapped his hands. Two attendants appeared instantly, and rolling up the defeated genie into as small a space as possible, they stuffed him back into the bottle, screwed on the top, and threw him three miles out into the ocean, where no doubt he remains to-day, as cross, vicious, and smoky as ever.

"Any further commands?" asked the genie of the lamp, smoothing down his ruffled locks.

"None! Thank you for your kindness," said Charming.

"Don't mention it," replied the genie. "I owed that fellow a grudge since King Solomon's days. He once stole my lollipop when we were kids. Now we're even."

And he vanished, leaving our thankful heroes in the middle of the road.





# The ADVENTURE with THE FORTY THIEVES

## CHAPTER XII

A NEW PERIL awaited them. Scarcely rid of one danger, they ran their necks into another.

They trudged along under the weight of their bags, discussing how they were going to invest their great wealth.

"I shall go to the Stock Exchange and speculate," said Rigolo,

"Isn't that rather uncertain?" asked Charming.

"Not at all. It's the most certain thing known. You're sure to lose your money."

"Then why try it, when you know you are going to lose?"

"That's what money is for," explained Rigolo. "You see it's this way. When you begin to speculate, they ask you, are you a bull, or a bear, or a lamb? If you say a bull, they take you by the horns and shake the money out of your pockets. If you say a bear, they take you by the back of the neck and you have a bare chance to escape with a whole skin. If they think you are a lamb, they make fricassee of you."

"They must be an awfully bad crowd," said Charming. "I'd rather meet Ali Baba's forty thieves at once; then at least I'd know what was going to happen."



Now this was a very imprudent speech, for he had hardly spoken before he saw a cloud of dust and heard the tramp of eighty feet, all wearing number ten boots. Up the forest path, toward our heroes, marched forty of the most villainous-looking fellows they had ever beheld.

"Oh dear," sighed Rigolo. "Your wish is coming true. Here's the whole gang of them."

Had the Prince and Rigolo been unburdened, they could have easily run away without being caught, but the heavy bags of precious stones made running impossible. You see wealth has its disadvantages too.

"Halt," shouted the Captain, and the forty thieves instantly stood so still that the Statue of Liberty seemed like a Jumping Jack in comparison.

The Captain looked sharply at Prince Charming and the Jester and then said, "I am told that you have untold wealth about you."

"If you have been told, the wealth can't be untold," said the Jester with a sickly smile.

"Shut up," yelled the Captain. "How dare you talk back?"

"He can't help it," said Charming politely. "He was born that way."

"Well he'll be borne the other way in just two minutes," yelled the Captain. "Off with them to the cave. We'll cut them up for lunch, and divide their wealth afterwards." But nobody carried out the order, for the other thirty-nine thieves had fallen over the diamonds and were gradually filling their pockets with them.

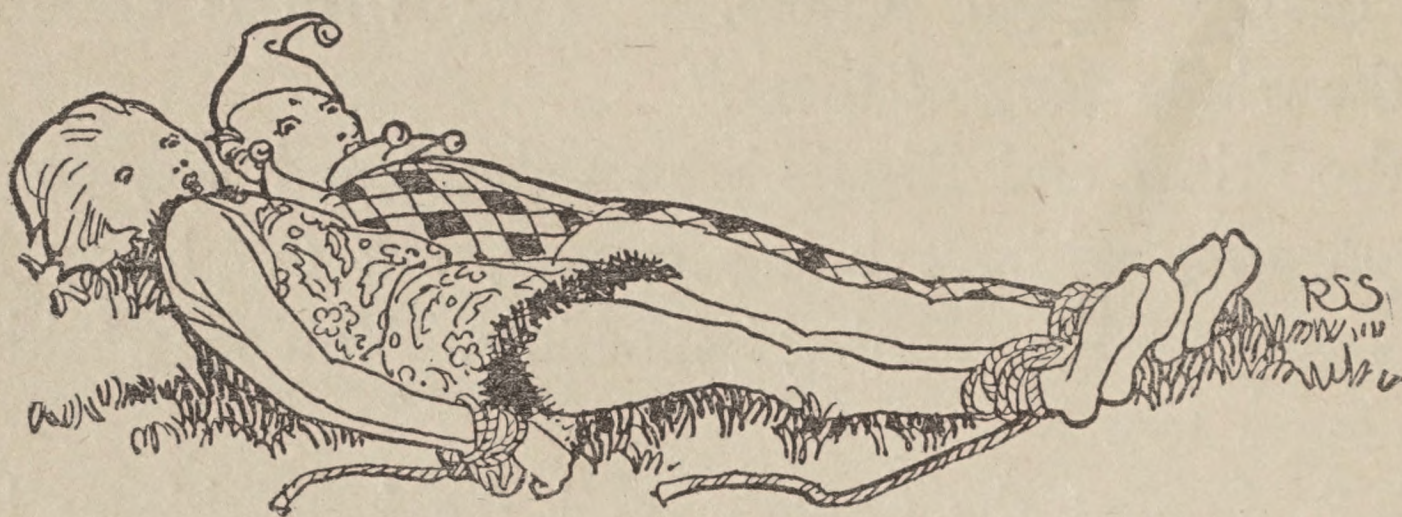
The Captain cried "Halt," and again they stood still.



"Tie those rascals," he shouted.

In a minute both our heroes were tied hand and foot and laid alongside of each other in the grass.

The Captain, believing them safe, gave his undivided attention to the divided diamonds, which by this time had nearly disappeared



TIED HAND AND FOOT

into the thirty-nine pockets. He took what was left and grumbled because they were not more.

"Take up those fellows and carry them to the cave," he commanded, in a terrible temper.

Poor Charming and Rigolo were thrown over the backs of a couple of burly robbers and carried off, while the whole troupe followed.

At last after climbing hills and walking through valleys, they reached the door of their cavern.

"Open Sesame," shouted the Captain, and at once the door swung open, showing the deep cavern behind it.

Charming and Rigolo, still tied, were laid down near the door, while the robbers went farther in to empty their pockets. The cave was filled with gold and silver, pictures and statues, and



other works of art, all taken from the apartments and tenement houses of the near-by towns. For you must know that in those days, the police were not nearly so careful and wide-awake as at the present time.

You could take up a paper almost any day and read of a burglary, sometimes of two. Burglars often carried off the family silver and even jewelry, and never were caught or punished. Of course those things don't happen now, for the forty thieves are long since dead, and the police department is perfect.

"Say Rigolo," whispered Charming when they were alone, "what shall we do?"

"Let's say our prayers," replied Rigolo, "for I think I hear them sharpening their swords," and he began:

"Enie, menie, minie, mo,  
Catch a burglar by the toe;  
If he yells, don't let him go,  
Enie, menie, minie, mo."



CARRIED OFF BY THE ROBBERS



"Are you sure that's a prayer?" asked Charming.

"It's the only one I ever learned," replied Rigolo.

"Amen," said Charming, who knew that was the proper ending to any prayer.

After a while Rigolo had a bright idea. "Say Charming," he whispered, "where's Aladdin's lamp?"

"Here at my side."

"Rub it."

"I can't reach it. My hands are tied behind my back."

"Roll over here to me and I'll do the rubbing."

Charming rolled over to Rigolo, who managed to reach it with one of his tied hands, and gave it a gentle rub.

Instantly there was a noise as of thunder, and the genie stood before them. "Did you rub her?" he asked turning from one to the other.

"I did," cried Rigolo. "Now listen well. First untie us; then take out those forty rascals into the forest and change them into sour apple trees."

The genie cut the cords that bound the two and set them on their feet. Then he waved his hand in the direction of the thieves, and, Presto! they stood like posts, without motion or feeling. Another wave of his hands, and they were out in the forest, rooted to the ground and actually bearing a crop of sour apples.

"What next?" inquired the genie, after he had surveyed his work with a smile of satisfaction.

"Now," continued Rigolo, "gather up our diamonds and pack them into the bags."



"It is done, my master," said the genie.

"'Tis well. Now deposit them with some Trust Company and bring us instead a bill of exchange for the amount of their value. We might as well be up-to-date in matters of finance as in other things."

"Of course," replied Charming. "If robbers catch us again, the drafts will be of no use to them."

"Not without our endorsement," explained Rigolo.

The genie disappeared, but in a moment returned with two beautiful engraved bills of exchange, each for two million Rosinobles, made out to the order of Charming Hullabaloo and Rigolo Funniboy.

"What next, O my master?" asked the genie with a bow.

"Now," said Rigolo, "take all this truck that the forty thieves have collected and give it back to its rightful owners."

This job seemed to stagger the genie, but the law of the lamp he had to obey.

He clapped his hands, and at once a regiment of lesser spirits appeared. Each seized an armful of property and flew off with it, and in just one hour and seventeen minutes, the plunder had been restored to those to whom it rightfully belonged. The newspapers next day had long accounts of how the police had at last awakened to their duty, and, having raided a den of thieves, had brought back valuables that had been lost for



POLICEMAN



years. For once the police, instead of being blamed for what they did do, got praised for what they didn't do. They were so happy about it that for the next day they did nothing at all, and as a result the head Commissioner gave them a "shaking up," which again got into the newspapers and caused no end of trouble. Which shows the truth of the adage, "A policeman's lot is not a happy one—happy one."

"Now," said Rigolo, when the genie was at leisure again and stood waiting for further commands, "take us to some country where there is a real princess imprisoned and really wanting somebody to rescue her, and give us a chance to show what we can do at the rescuing business."

The genie's eyes twinkled and a queer smile spread over his face. He bowed low, and taking Charming in one hand and Rigolo in the other, flew with them over land and sea, and set them down before the gates of Kokola, where reigned the Emperor Oshkish.



A FLIGHT THROUGH THE AIR



Before the genie disappeared, he said :

“O my masters, listen. As Patrick Henry once remarked, I have but one lamp by which my footsteps are guided, and that is the lamp that you have there. Beware lest you lose it. In the realm of the Emperor Oshkish, you will see some terrible things, and if at the moment when most you need me, the lamp should be gone, no power on earth can bring it back to you. If it should be lost——”

“We could advertise it in the lost and found column,” said Rigolo with ready wit, “and offer a reward for its return.”

“True, you might,” replied the Genie, “but nevermore would you see it or me. So beware! beware! beware!”

As he muttered these words, each time louder than before, he grew thinner and thinner, just as though he were a spirit at a spiritualists’ meeting, and at last he was gone, leaving the two friends alone. A strict grammarian might say that they were not alone, for they were together, but that’s altogether a matter for school teachers to decide.





### CHAPTER XIII

**T**HE LAND OF KOKOLA, as you can see by looking at a map of Fairy-land, lies in Flatitude 30 and Promptitude  $21\frac{1}{2}$ , just three degrees below the North Pole. Now one would imagine that it must be very cold there, and that the principal crop would be icicles. But that's an error, for the country is really quite warm. Owing to the curve of the ice around the pole, the rays of the sun are reflected to a point called a focus, and Kokola lies right in that focus, and thus gets all the heat it needs. This seems hard to understand, but it isn't. You can try it for yourself. Take a parabolical concave speculum—(if you haven't any, take a mirror or a burning glass), and hold it in such a way toward the sun that the rays of light come to a point on your hand. In about two minutes your hand will be so hot that you will have to put vaseline on. If you can't get vaseline, try cold cream. Sweet oil is also good. Now imagine your hand is Kokola, and it becomes as simple as rolling off a log.

There was another reason why the people of Kokola were not cold, namely because Emperor Oshkish kept them in hot water





THE EMPEROR SLIDING DOWNSTAIRS







most of the time. He was a hot-tempered kind of emperor, who thought he was the whole show. His fondness for talking and posing almost got his country in trouble with surrounding countries until the Congress made a fuss and threatened to reduce his salary. The people were very hot about it.

It was rumored that the Emperor kept an enchanted princess in his castle, but no one had ever seen her. At night there were often hideous noises in the garden near a certain window, and while some of the neighbors said it was the yellow cat which made her home in the kitchen, others said it was something even worse. None of the cooks ever stayed more than a week or two, and that again gave rise to disagreeable rumors. Some said that the temper of the Empress was such that she didn't hesitate to throw a plate at their heads if the sauce was too peppery. Others said that the cook-ladies left on account of the behavior of the yellow cat. So the people were very much mystified.

Well—we had almost forgotten that while we were describing the country, our heroes stood before the door of the castle.

There was a sign out:—

“Strangers welcome! Wipe your feet on the mat.”



COOK-LADY



This they did, and then they pushed the electric button. A page opened the door for them. He was a nice page, like a page in a picture book—the first page after the cover.



"WHO IS IT, JAKE?"

"Who is it, Jake?" cried the Emperor looking over the railing. "The grocery man with the bill? Say Zu-zu to the grocery man and tell him to call again. I don't get my salary till March 4th."

"It's not a bill, your Highness," said Jake. "Just two young men fellows to see you."

"Oh, tell them I'm out. Went out yesterday to tell the Czar of Timbuctoo how to

manage his Douma, and won't be back till next week."

"It won't do," said Jake. "They saw you peep over the railing."

"Well, tell them I've nothing on but an ermine bath robe."

"Never mind, your Highness," said Charming. "It's only I, the only son of King Hullabaloo. Just put on your crown and come down."

So the Emperor put on his second best crown, put his sceptre



into his pocket, and slid down two flights of stairs by way of the banisters.

His reception of Prince Charming and Rigolo was what the society papers would call "cordial in the extreme," though different from the customs of our country. He slapped Charming on the cheek, and pulled Rigolo's nose, all the time telling them how glad he was to see them. And when the yellow cat got in his way, he at once took her by the tail and swung her around, and the whole company became mixed up in a great tangle in which the fur flew, and the noise was like Richard Strauss's music in one of his new-fangled operas. After which they all sat down and had tea and Unneedas, while the cat, with tears in her eyes, crept into the corner and tried to straighten out the fur that still remained on her tail.

Mrs. Emperor Oshkish came in and said how glad she was to see them, and thinking that Rigolo was the prince, told him that he was the image of his father. Then Rigolo related that well known joke of his, "What relation is a mat to a door-scraper? A stepfather," whereat they fairly shrieked with merriment.

"What brings you to us?" at last asked the Emperor with a smile, wiping his chin on his sleeve.

"I'm out trying to rescue a princess to be my wife, and I've been told that you have a captive lady in this castle," said Charming.

Although it was broad daylight outside, the Emperor frowned so darkly that the butlers had to turn on the electric lights. He was fearful to behold. His eyes glared and his fingers twitched as though he wanted to choke somebody.



You see this was a dangerous subject to talk about, as he wanted to keep the whole terrible story a secret.

Charming saw that he had made a mistake, and wished that the genie had posted him what to say and what not to say. He wondered what was going to happen next.

The Emperor arose, and taking a tea-cup from the table, threw it at Charming's head, but being in a temper, he missed the Prince and struck a \$2000 plate mirror instead. Then Mrs. Emperor Oshkish took a hand in the affair and threw a plate at her imperial husband, to which he replied with the sceptre. The yellow cat took such an interest in the matter that she got mixed up in the Emperor's legs, and as Charming and Rigolo tried to dodge, they too were drawn into the fight, so that it was difficult to tell who was who and which was which. It was a real interesting set-to, with everybody on top and nobody at the bottom. At last the Emporor thought he had enough, and managed to rise to his feet. He fixed his crown straight upon his massive brow, and rang the bell for his army, which came on at once—all three of it—and asked for orders.

"Take these two miscreants into the darkest hole in the furthestmost depths of the castle dug-out, and there let them have nothing but breakfast-food till they starve to death."

In vain Charming pleaded for mercy and said he'd never do it again. In vain Rigolo begged to be allowed to go home to his wife and twelve little ones.

The Emperor was as firm as adamant (whatever that may be), and our heroes were led to their cells. Rigolo, with a brave show



of wit, sang, "Tramp, tramp, tramp, the boys are marching," but their spirits were very low just the same. Just as the jailer was locking them in, he noticed the lamp hanging at Charming's side.

"Hello," he cried, "what's this? His majesty said you were to be in the dark. I'm in the dark myself as to why he gave this order, but his majesty must be obeyed. Therefore, it is my duty to take away your lamp, or you might make a light and thus make light of your sentence." He took the lamp and threw it through the window into the castle moat, and locking the door left them alone, trembling with fear. It was very dark in the dungeon. A black dog drinking a bottle of ink on a dark night was really dazzlingly white in comparison.

Suddenly two balls of fire seemed to blaze up in the corner, followed by a terrible sound, as though a thousand cats were trying to say "meow" at the same time.

"Dear me, what's that?" asked Charming in a fright.

"Hist! It is I," said a voice that came from under the table.



THE KING SWINGS THE CAT



"Who are you?" inquired Rigolo. "Where's your visiting card?"

"I am the yellow cat," said the voice. "I crept in between the jailer's legs and here I am."

"Now that you are here," said Rigolo, "how do you propose to help us? What was your purr-puss in coming, anyway?"

"Hist!" whispered the cat. "Can't you guess who I am?"

"Though you are a gory cat, we really don't know in what cat-e-gory to place you," replied Rigolo, funny as ever in spite of his troubles.

"You have no doubt read of Poe's Black Cat?"

"Yes indeed," replied Charming. "I admire Poe very much."

"Well I'm not that black cat," said the yellow cat.

"I thought as much," said Charming, "for the Black Cat is now a story magazine at ten cents a copy."

"Hist!" said the cat. "Have you read the story of the White Cat?"

"Oh yes, I know all about her," replied Charming.

"Well I'm the White Cat turned yellow through trouble and grief."

"Nonsense," said Charming. "The White Cat lost her head and tail and became a princess."

"Exactly. I've lost my head many a time, and turned tail scores of times, and become a princess quite often. But through the evil power (I had almost said machinations, but that is too



big a word for a fairy-tale cat to use) of an old witch, I am back in the form of the same old cat, and I'm completely tired of it."

"Why?" asked Charming.

"Hist! Because as a cat I am leading a regular dog's life. You noticed how the emperor treated me. He knows I am the Princess, in fact the only daughter, of his brother the King of Nixcumrous, and yet he would kill me if he could. He has in fact taken seven of my nine lives, and I have only two left."

"But why this cruelty?" asked Rigolo pityingly.

"Because," said the cat, "if I regain my form, all my fortune, which Uncle Oshkish is now enjoying, becomes mine again. Do you see? Hist!"

"Dear me, I wish you wouldn't say Hist! so often," said Charming. "It gets on my nerves."

"It shows that she has histrionic ability," said Rigolo.

"If you help me," said the cat, "I will help you."

"Certainly," said Charming. "We were created to help one another. That's the golden rule. But how?"

"Hist—I mean listen! Cut off my head and tail and I'll be a beautiful princess again. Then we will all escape together."

"It will be a wholesale escape," said Rigolo, "for if you lose your tail, you certainly cannot be retailed," whereupon he laughed till even the window of the dungeon had a pane. He was such a funny jester, and his jokes were so new and original.



"I would cut you up with pleasure and marry you afterwards," said Charming, "but, alas, I have no knife."

"True," said Rigolo.

"How can he cut it without any knife?  
How can he marry without any wife?"

"How unfortunate," said Puss. "Just my luck. You couldn't bite them off, could you?"

"Hardly. Oh, if we only hadn't lost Aladdin's lamp."

"You haven't got anything about you, have you," asked the cat, "that might have been given to you by a fairy godmother?"

Now Charming had entirely forgotten the four leaf clover which his mother had given him, and which, besides slipping his memory, had slipped through a hole in his pocket into the lining of his coat. After a hasty search, he found it, and managed to dig it out.

The only light in that dark dungeon was that provided by the cat's blazing eyes, but it was quite light enough to see the trinket by.

"Here it is," said Charming.

"Good," said the cat. "It looks familiar. Rub it."

Charming rubbed it, but nothing happened.

"I remember my fairy godmother told me a word to say next time I needed her assistance, but I have forgotten it entirely," said the Prince.

"It wasn't Abracadabra or Presto Change was it?" asked



Rigolo. "That's what sleight of hand performers say when they want something to appear or to disappear."

"No, it sounded more like Dingle Dangle" said Charming.

"Perhaps it was Simsolerimbimbaselamidusseldolerim," said the cat.

"That's it. How did you know?"

"Because it's a regular stock word for fairy godmothers. Mine used to say it too."

"Perhaps we have the same godmother," said the Prince.

"Wouldn't that be lovely? But hurry. Rub the thing and say the word."

Charming did as the cat suggested. Instantly the dungeon was lit up by that soft sixteen-candle glow which we remember from Chapter III, and Fairy Papillion rose out of the floor, as pretty and fresh as ever—and, oh, how deliciously welcome!

"Well, my boy," she said, "you have called me and here I am. What can I do for you?"

The Prince fell about her neck for joy. He told her of his adventures since their last meeting, and the Fairy shed several tears of sympathy for him.

"And who is this?" asked Papillion, pointing to Rigolo.

"This is Rigolo Funniboy, the Jester," said Charming.

"Not Rigolo, the author of that celebrated joke about the Irishman who ate a red pepper in mistake for a tomato?"

"The same," replied Rigolo, casting down his eyes with becoming modesty.



"How glad I am to meet you. Some day when I have time, I will call on you, and you can spring all your gags on me."

You see the Fairy spoke a strange language at times, which was only used in Fairy-land.

Just then the cat, who had retreated to a corner, came out rather bashfully. She wanted to be noticed too.

The moment she saw the Fairy, she knew that it was Papillion.

"How do you do, Fairy Papillion," she said. "Don't you remember me?"

"I can't say that I do," replied the Fairy. "But then I meet so many cats, that I——"

"But I'm no real cat. I'm the Princess Yolande, the daughter of King Nixcumrous, and you are my fairy god-mother."

"Why, bless my soul!" said the Fairy. "What are you doing in that make-up?"

Yolande told her sad story.

"Oh, won't you please turn me back into my natural shape?" she pleaded.

"Why of course, my dear," said Papillion, and giving her a single tap with her wand, the cat disappeared as if by magic, and there stood the most beautiful maiden that Fairy-land had ever produced.

Fifi, Fatinella, and all the other captive princesses were really plain in comparison.



"Oh, thank you ever so much," she said gushingly. "Only those who have been changed into cats can have any idea how tiresome it is. One is so cramped. And to have to say Meow when one would rather talk English, and to have to eat mice when one prefers spring chicken, and then to be swung around by the tail till it feels like breaking off. I assure you it is no fun."

Papillion kissed Yolande and said, "Now my dear, allow me to introduce to you Prince Charming Hullabaloo, your second cousin, and one of my two thousand other god-children."

"I already know the Prince," said Yolande casting down her beautiful eyes.

"He needs a wife, and you want a husband, and I, therefore, decree that you shall be one. Although I am not sure which one it shall be."

"Will you be my better-half?" asked Charming, taking Yolande's hand.

"I'll do better," whispered Yolande; "I'll be the whole thing."

"Bless you, my children," said the Fairy. "And now suppose we all go home to King Hullabaloo and celebrate the wedding."

She waved her wonderful wand and instantly the walls of the dungeon disappeared, showing the beautiful gardens of Emperor Oshkish outside, and there posed in the grass were

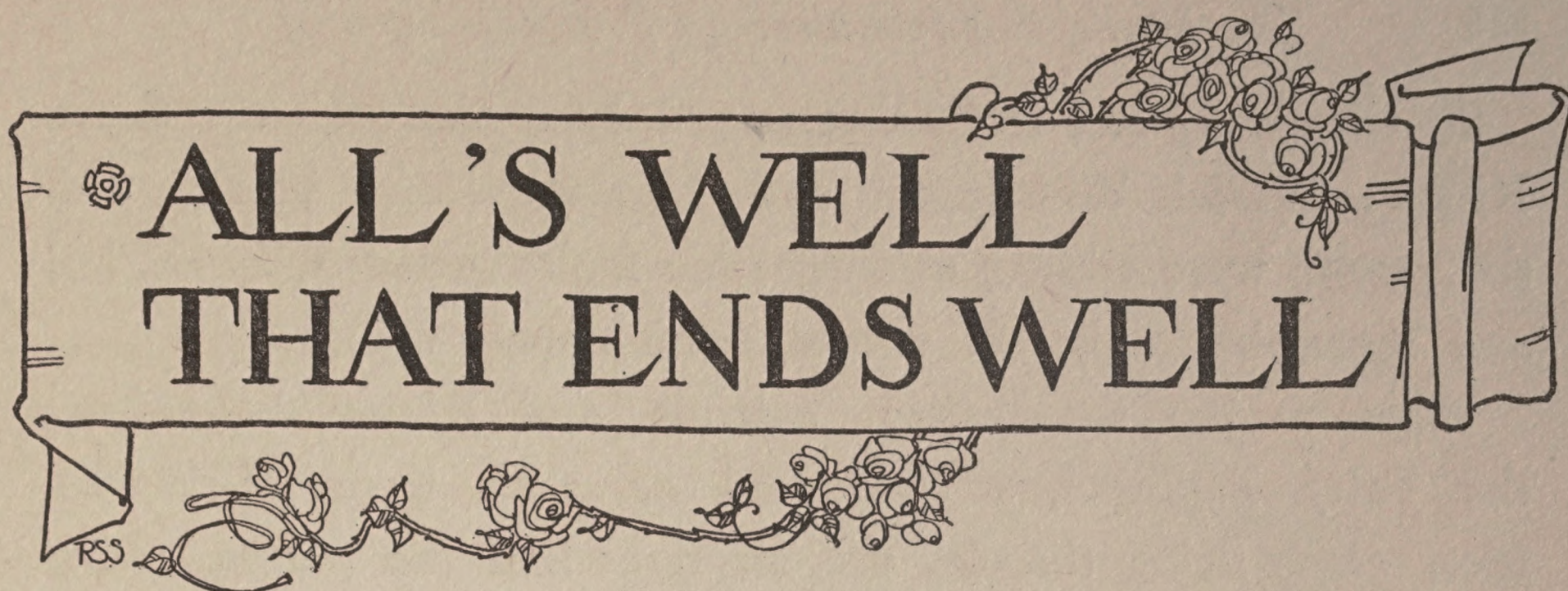


four brilliantly colored butterflies, as big as ponies, all saddled ready to mount.

Each got astride a butterfly and off they flew over hill and dale to the land of King Hullabaloo. But first they sent a marconigram, which is a fairy word for a message, that they were coming, so that the King could put the cider on ice, get the Hungarian orchestra ready, and set the table for the feast.







## CHAPTER XIV

**W**HEN the party arrived in King Hullabaloo's Kingdom, they found everything in a state of great excitement.

The people were all out on the street waving flags and shouting themselves hoarse. The bands were playing at every corner. Everybody was in a fine good humor. The very persons who were glad when the Prince went away, were now delighted that he was coming back, especially with so charming and sensible a wife, who was sure to see that he behaved himself.

For you must know that all Prince Charming's deeds had been duly recorded in the newspapers of the Kingdom. His fight with the Crocogator, for instance, filled a whole column in the Daily Bombastico. The story of his adventures in the courts of Chico, Cole, Heinrich, and the other royal gentlemen, had been read by the people, and told by them to their children, and were written down in a big book with beautiful illustrations, to sell for \$4.98 a volume, net, at all the book stores.



So Charming had really become a hero like Jack the Giant Killer and Dick Whittington and other wonderful fellows, and the people were willing to forget his faults (which were many), and remember only his virtues (which were few).

When at last the Prince, Yolande, and Rigolo, headed by the Fairy Papillion, all mounted on their beautiful butterflies, came flying through the air right into the palace courtyard, the cannons were booming, and the shouting people greeted them with "Hurrah" and "Hoch" and "Benzai" and anything else they could think of.



THE BRIDE LOOKED LOVELY

The King put away his money, and the Queen her bread and honey, and the maid in the garden stopped hanging up the clothes, and all gave the visitors a hearty welcome.

After Charming had told all about his adventures, and Yolande had told hers, and Fairy Papillion had explained how she happened to be there, Rigolo was introduced by Charming.

"Without his help, Father dear," said the Prince, "I could have done very little. When things went wrong, when everything seemed blue, it was Rigolo's wit that brought new hope."



"Yes" said the King, "we all know that a little nonsense now and then is relished by the best of men. Well Rigolo, tell us a brand new joke, just to show us whether your wit is as great as your reputation."

"Tell us a big whopper," urged Charming.

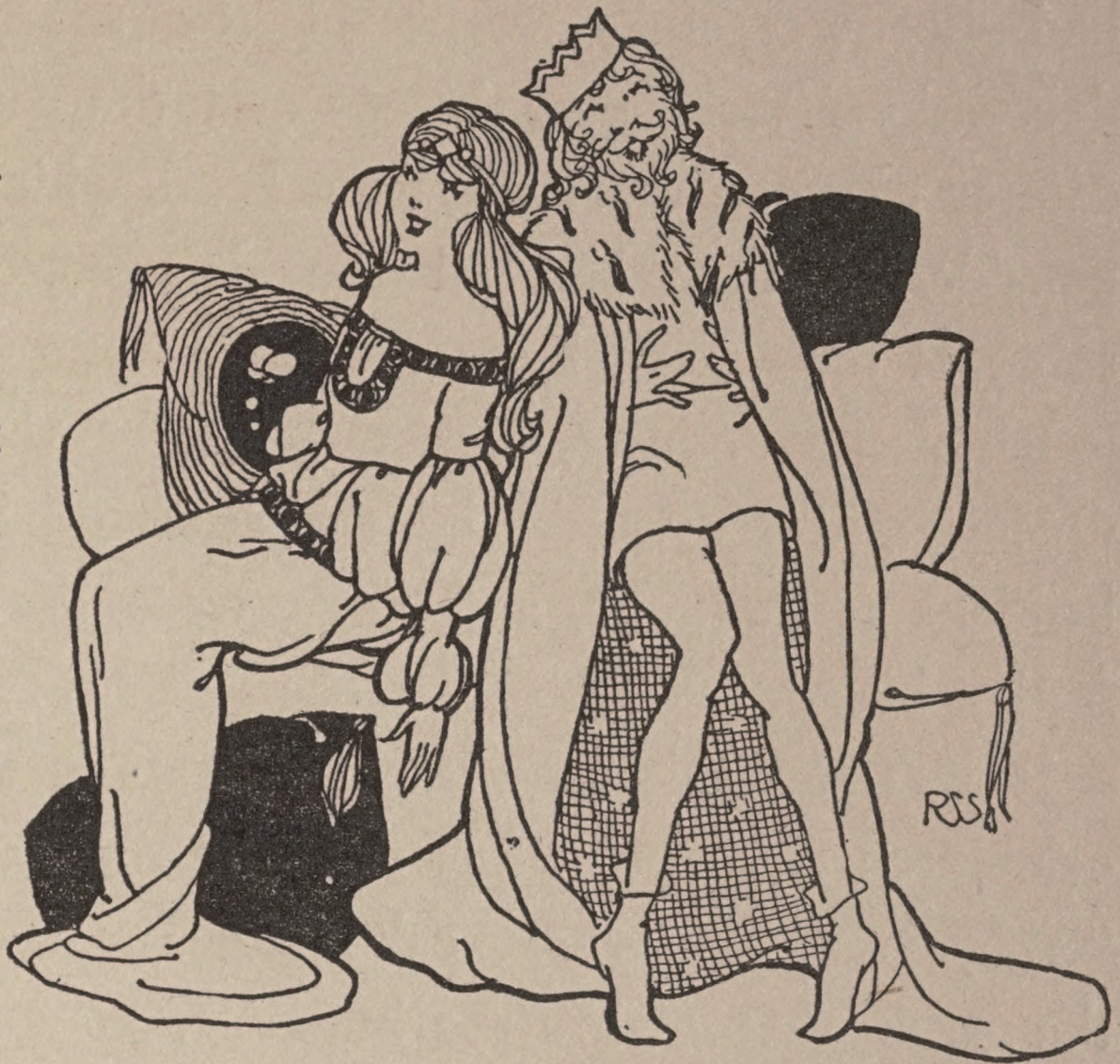
Then it was that Rigolo invented that famous joke that has since been considered the greatest of all jokes—about the man by the name of Bigger who had a little boy.

Now which was the

Bigger of these two Biggers, the father or the son? Why the son of course, for while the father was Bigger, the son was a little Bigger.

The whole court laughed immoderately, and the King choked so with merriment that they had to put him under the shower in the bath room. When he recovered he engaged Rigolo at once to be his court jester at a salary of nothing the first year and double as much every year thereafter.

The wedding took place next day at high noon. The organ



THE KING AT THE WEDDING



played Bundleson's wedding march. The bride looked lovely in white surah silk, trimmed with spangles.

The banquet was held in the kitchen of the palace, which had been carefully scrubbed for the occasion. The table decorations were magnificent and the eating first class. The caterer charged three dollars a head, which was very reasonable considering they had all the delicatessen of the season, and some of the season before.

Rigolo, of course, was the life of the party, although the Queen said he would be the death of her. His wit was as brilliant as scourene, and none were bored who sat about the festive board.

It was on this momentous occasion that he invented that celebrated riddle, that has since become a classic in Fairy-land: "Why is a buckwheat cake like a caterpillar? Because it is the grub that makes the butterfly."

When midnight came and the King was asked to respond to a toast, he arose, but as there was no one to hold him, he quickly and silently sat down again. This was taken as a sign that his majesty was tired. So, with the aid of the Major Domo and the Court Chamberlain, they got him to retire. The Fairy disappeared in a halo of light, and the wedding, as well as the wonderful adventures of Prince Charming, came to

AN END.















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